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# The Arion,

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

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## EDITORIAL.

IN reply to a later communication from Dr. Strathy, which may be found further on, concerning the Chair of Music at Trinity College, we have this to say: First, that the communication purporting to be a reply to our editorial remarks in the May number of THE ARION, is very far from such. We said "seemingly nominal position," and we repeat it since the Dr. has not shown that a single student or other has ever taken a degree. We did not question the Dr.'s appointment, nor the manner of it. Secondly, we do not for a moment dispute that any man has a right to remuneration for services rendered. But we do emphatically deny the assertion which the Doctor makes, and whose example he professes to follow, that those who have done "*most* for Art" have always required remuneration. On the contra, there is no class of men in the world more self-sacrificing, and less prone to put a mercenary value upon service rendered for the advancement of their art, than the Artist class, whether in music or painting. And, since we cannot dispute the Dr.'s "*desire*" for the advancement of his Art, we must allow it to rest there. As far as we are personally concerned, we have not arrived at that condition entitling us to be classed as a "*rara avis*," but we modestly lay claim to having made a few sacrifices for the benefit of the art and the profession which we follow, and we had humbly hoped that our services were *worth something*. As for the "*sinister motives lurking behind*," we are at a loss to know what they could be. We assure the Dr. we have no personal feeling in this matter whatever, and shall be willing to apply for a degree, if only to remove the reproach which twenty years of existence, without a graduate, leaves upon the Chair of Music in Trinity College.

## CHORUS WORK.

There has been much earnest and patient hard work done by skilful chorus masters in Toronto and other parts of Canada, and great credit and praise is due to them for the rendering of some of the best works from the great masters in the manner in which they have been given from time to time; but those among us who have spent some years in connection with the large festival choirs in the old country know full well that much hard work has yet to be done before these works can be produced in anything like the efficient manner in which they ought to be, and the question arises, how is this desired result to be brought about. The opinion of the writer of this article is that there is but one way, and that is to commence at the foundation. The choristers who desire

to take part in these sublime works should have passed through some systematic elementary musical education in class singing, or otherwise, before being allowed to become a member of an advanced choral society, so that in place of the chorus-master being obliged to spend much valuable time in teaching the choir by note, most of this parrot work would be done away with, and every member would be able to take up their part in an intelligent manner, much more work could be gone through in the same amount of time, and more attention paid to expression, etc., and especially is this required in modern works, for since the time of Beethoven and Spohr vocal harmonies have abounded with chromatic, augmented and diminished intervals (which old masters did not use so freely) and they are difficult to produce with anything like proper intonation. Therefore choristers require special training preparatory to taking part in these great works. We have many most excellent voices in our midst and many with good genial dispositions, but alas, from the lack of submitting to proper training, how many produce a nasal tone, others singing through their teeth, flat intonation, etc., and beyond all this if choristers acquired more true musical knowledge what beauties would unfold before them, how they would enjoy these rich harmonies which at present to many are as a sealed book, with what better judgment would music be selected for church, school and home use, the true from the false, in place of the drone bass, which gives a sickly monotony, we would have choral music selected, in which each part forms an independent melody, yet one rich, harmonious whole when combined. And again, more skill could and would be manifested in having a proper balance of voices in each part, which cannot be done at the present time, for the chorus-master of necessity has to make the best of his material at hand, but if certain knowledge was more general, he would receive more hearty co-operation, aid and needed generous support in bringing about that desideratum which we hope is not in the far future.

R. BLACKBURN.

## THE TRAMP PROFESSOR.

To the Editor of THE ARION.

We find at the present day throughout the country many who pretend to teach vocal and instrumental music. What really actuates them to take upon themselves the responsibility of teaching that art which exerts such a refining influence upon society, is not generally known. One thing is evident, they come far short of honorably filling the position they occupy, if we may be permitted to judge them by their pupils. We find this to be the case not only with teachers of vocal but also instrumental

music. If their pupils are able to sing or finger over a few pieces on the organ, they consider that their duty is done, and yet these very same pupils are not able to answer the simplest questions about the work that they have gone over. Furthermore, go through our towns, villages and rural districts, and examine all who sing in choirs and others, and find out how many, on being presented with a piece of music they never saw before, can sing it through correctly without the aid of a musical instrument,—probably three or four out of a hundred. Some may think this is a bold statement, but it is true, nevertheless. The rising generation are very deficient in this respect. What we want, in order to arrive at any degree of proficiency in the art of music, is, first, to have the people roused to the necessity of paying more attention to this particular branch of education; second, a class of teachers who have passed their examinations, and received certificates of both character and ability, and who will faithfully perform the duties assigned them; and, third, protection against so many frauds and high toned tramps, who have neither respect for the Almighty, themselves, nor others, who swarm the country and call themselves Professors of Music. Healthy representations of a Divine Art! One comes to a place and makes a big spread. Wears a plug hat, a white necktie, black kids and all accoutrements of a professional humbug; he organizes a class for the purpose of training the voice and preparing the Cantata of Queen Esther, stores away a lot of beer and stuff, falls in love with one of the young ladies the wedding day is appointed. Finally it comes to light that he is a married man and has two or three wives around the country. He departs very suddenly, leaving his board, washing and other bills unpaid for, and that is the last of the Professor. This is not an overdrawn picture, as two such characters are known to the writer. Besides the tramp Professors, there are those who are permanently located, who do not know the first thing about music. They receive the title as a compliment, one because he is a fair singer, another because he sings comical songs, and in many cases, the title is self-applied. Under these circumstances how is the art to attain its proper standing, and be looked upon by the country at large as something pure, elevating, and of a refining character. The state in which we find the young people in reference to the knowledge of music is proof positive that we are very negligent of our duty in this respect, in fact, music is left too much to itself to thrive as best it can, and can it be any subject of wonder that we are not further advanced.

There has been a good deal said in the late numbers of THE ARION in reference to having a Chair of Music established for the granting of degrees. Without the least hesitation I affirm that it is the very thing that is needed. We must give encouragement to teachers, and by granting degrees, it would be some inducement for to become a teacher. We want our music teachers to be

looked upon as much of a necessity as a public school teacher, and, in addition to all this, we want our musical conventions for the improvement of teachers besides all the other benefits that will accrue from them. Let us take off our coats, roll up our sleeves, conquer our prejudices, put our shoulder to the wheel and fight manfully to reach the goal of perfection.

### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

Mlle. Constanze Skiwa, pianist, has died in Vienna, aged thirty-nine.

Stefano Gobatti, composer of "Il Goti," has been created Knight of the Italian Crown.

"Les Huguenots" was performed on April 20, for the 700th time, at the Grand Opera, Paris.

Rubinstein arrived in London, May 1, and is now off to the provinces for a piano-forte recital tour.

MR. ARBUCKLE, accompanied by his daughter, sailed for Europe on the City of Montreal on Thursday.

Handel's "Messiah" was performed a short time since, under the direction of Hugo Senger, at Geneva.

Hans Richter has also arrived, and his concerts will begin on May 9, with the "Choral" symphony and other works.

Madame Patti is sick in Paris, and she has been unable to appear for ten days. Bronchitis is the cause. TRINCULO.

Pierre Benoit's "Children's Cantata" has been twice given in Rotterdam. The chorus included in its ranks some 400 children.

MADAME AMBRE, the truant opera singer, scattered pearls all the way from New Orleans to Philadelphia. They were left in pawn. It is said the fair owner left \$5,000 worth of jewelry in this country which she did not need so badly as ready cash.

STERNBERG has been engaged for a series of twelve concerts in the West before his return to Europe. It is said that he will be married to a Breslau lady of distinction before his return to New York for the next concert season, when he will appear at the Philharmonic.

THE cornet rage will still be encouraged by managers this summer. Levy asserts, and he asserts it boldly, that he signed a contract for \$500 per week, with his board thrown in, at Brighton Beach. He seems to be happier in his anticipation of receiving free board than he does his salary.

THE Philharmonic Society, of Washington, D. C., produced the oratorio of "The Creation" at the National Theatre, May 13, and Rossini's "Stabat Mater" May 14, at their May festival. They were assisted by Mrs. Imogen Brown, Signor Campanini. Miss Mena Waring made her debut as a contralto on the second evening. Owing to the intensely hot weather the attendance was only fair.

DR. LEOPOLD DAMROSCH was presented, on Thursday night, by the ladies of the Oratorio Society, a bust of Beethoven, two elegant wicker chairs, upholstered in embossed scarlet velvet and old gold, and a heavy silver tray, upon which rested a large pitcher, goblet and finger bowls. Mrs. Charles Gaylor made the presentation speech, and Dr. Damrosch, in response, spoke in glowing terms of the society and the success of the music festival, thanking those who had contributed to its success, and for the elegant presents they had given him.

LILLIE.—In the "Mignon" of Thomas, *Lothario* sets fire to the theatre where *Philine* is acting. During this scene some musicians at the Grand Theatre expressed a fear one evening that the flames might extend from the scenery to

the building itself. Their observations were overheard by a nervous occupant of one of the stalls, who immediately raised the cry of "fire!" A panic ensued, but did not last long, the audience soon finding there was no just cause for alarm.

#### MR. SIMS REEVES ILL AGAIN.

Mr. Sims Reeves is making a series of "farewell appearances" in Oratorio at the Albert Hall, and the leading attraction of the programme is that Mr. Reeves does not appear. The situation is a singular one, for how can it be called a "farewell appearance" when the great tenor, afflicted with neuralgia and a swollen face, is drinking his gruel and is comfortably tucked up in his little bed. At his first "farewell" Mr. Sims Reeves was too ill to sing more than one song, and last night in the "Creation" he was too sick to sing at all. However, with Mme. Albani, Messrs. Lloyd and Santley, there was a strong cast and the hall was pretty full.

#### BERLIOZ'S FANTASTIC SYMPHONY.

A splendid audience of nearly all the leading musicians of London assembled to listen to the first performance in this capital of Berlioz's "Épisode en la vie d'un Artiste," on Saturday. The work was produced by M. Ganz, and as I believe is familiar to your amateurs I need not trouble you with details.

#### ANOTHER PUPIL OF LISZT.

At this concert another pupil of the Abbe-Liszt, an Austrian lady, Frau Sophie Menter, made her debut. Frau Menter seems to be one of the most extraordinarily gifted female piano-forte executants of our day. How far she possesses poetic feeling and an ability to demonstrate it will be seen when she plays something more congenial to our tastes than Liszt's concerto in E flat.

#### MADAME ALBANI IN OPERA.

On April 30, Madame Albani made her re-appearance at the Royal Opera House as *Gilda*. The choice was unfortunate, for "Rigoletto" is long since played out, and it is not at all likely to attract stalls at six dollars and a half. Madame Albani has grown almost matronly in figure, recalling Miss Clara Louise Kellogg rather than the slim Canadian girl whom the elder Mr. Gye took in hand a few years ago as a foil to Madame Patti.

SIGNOR TAGLIAPIETRA and several other members of the Italian Opera Company to which he belongs have been in the clutch of New Jersey Justice. They were so delighted with Newcastle, Del., where they sang on Friday last, that they determined to spend two or three days there. On Sunday they went fishing in the river with as much innocence as is consistent with a violation of the fourth commandment, but they had only just got their tackle in order when the New Jersey fisheries police-boat swooped down upon the unsuspecting baritone and his friends and carried them off to Salem for trial. Upon the assurance that all charges and damages would be paid the prisoners were allowed to depart.

## NEW MUSIC REVIEW.

PUBLISHED BY I. SUCKLING & SONS.

"Abide with us." Composed by F. H. Torrington. A graceful and melodious setting of the words of the well known hymn published in two keys,—D flat and Bb, respectively. There are a few errors in harmony which should have been avoided. Notably a wrong resolution of the minor seventh and a leading note doubled in the upper part without preparation, otherwise the song is well written.

## THE PIONEER'S CAMP.

\* HENRY C. WATSON

After the weary travel of the day,  
Encamped beneath vast overhanging trees,  
Whose tangled arms a welcome shadow make,  
The hardy pioneer now takes his rest.  
The change from labor to a deep repose  
Falls on his soul with gentle, soothing calm;  
A stillness that is almost felt pervades  
The scene, so desolate, so beautiful.  
The song of birds died with the golden sunlight,  
And only now, far in the undergrowth,  
The weary cattle, searching for their food,  
Disturb the brooding quiet of the night,  
Gliding along in curious, sinuous course,  
A silent streamlet darkly flowed away,  
Until from out a heavy bank of clouds  
Uprose the full-orbed moon, and sent a ray  
Of silver sheen o'er tent and tree and stream.

\* Critic, Music and Art, and founder of *The American Art Journal*.

## Answers to Correspondents.

J. MCKAY, St. Marys:—

If your pupil, without forcing, or distressing himself, can sing the compass you indicate, he has the range of a good bass voice, which, with care, since the bass voice is the last to develop, will improve in strength and quality with years. Certainly let him not seek to alter what nature has determined. See articles on Voice Nos. 1, 2, 3, "ARION."

No definite pitch can be given as to how high boys or girls should sing. This must be determined by each individual voice. As a general rule, no note should be *persisted* in that requires a *great* effort to produce or that distress in producing.

## ANECDOTES:

"'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark  
Our coming, and look brighter when we come."

A BEAUTIFUL IDEA.—In the mountains of Tyrol, hundreds of women and children come out when it is bedtime and sing their national song until they hear their husbands, fathers or brothers answer them from the hills on their return home. On the shore of the Adriatic, the wives of fishermen come down about sunset and sing a melody. They sing the first verse and then listen for some time; they then sing the second verse, and listen until they hear the answer come from the fishermen, who are thus guided by the sounds to their own village.

RAPHAEL.—Frances I, having received a picture of St. Michael from the hand of Raphael d' Urbino, which he much coveted, he remunerated Raphael far beyond what his modesty conceived he ought to receive. The generous artist, however, made him a present of a Holy Family, painted by himself, which the courageous monarch received saying that "persons famous in the arts partake of the immortality of princes, and are upon a footing with them."

BEFRIENDING GENIUS.—Those who befriend genius when struggling for distinction, befriend the world, and their names should be held in remembrance. There is a good sense and right feeling in the reply of Mahomet to the insinuations of the fair Ayesha, that his first wife Codijah, was old and unlovely, and that he had now a

better in her place: "No, there never was a better; she *believed* in me when men despised me, she relieved my wants when I was poor and persecuted in the world."

THE names of Smith, Hamilton, Kelly, Allen, Jackson, Rutherford and Lord Grantham must be dear to all admirers of West; they aided him in the infancy of his fame and fortune, they cheered him when he was drooping and desponding, and watched over his person and purse with the vigilance of true friendship.

The story of his success with the portrait of Lord Grantham found its way to Allen of Philadelphia when he was at dinner with Governor Hamilton. "I regard this young man," said the worthy merchant, "as an honor to his country, and as he is the first that his country has sent out to cultivate the fine arts, he shall not be frustrated in his studies, for I shall send him whatever money he requires. "I think with you, sir," said Hamilton, "but you must not have all the honor to yourself; allow me to unite with you in the responsibility of the credit." Some time afterwards when West went to take up ten pounds from his agents, the last of the sum with which he had commenced his studies, one of the partners opened a letter and said, "I am instructed to give you unlimited credit, you will have the goodness to ask for what sum you please." It is not without cause that Mr. Galt says, "The munificence of the Medici was equalled by these American magistrates."

#### TORONTO CHORAL SOCIETY.

The last concert, this season, of the Toronto Choral Society took place in the Pavilion of the Horticultural Garden on the evening of 20th May. The large hall was well filled—all the seats, both floor and gallery, being occupied. The stage was tastefully draped with scarlet, and when the tiers of seats (rising one above another) were filled with their fair occupants, it presented the appearance of a huge bouquet of flowers.

The principal features of the concert were a sacred Cantata "Come Let us Sing," for solos, chorus and orchestra, by Mendelssohn, and Secular Cantata, "The Dream," also for solo, chorus and orchestra, composed by Sir Michael Costa. With the exception of the first number, the Overture to Semiramide, by the orchestra, the remaining numbers of the programme were of a miscellaneous character. The chorus was in good force. Sopranos and contraltos very fairly balanced, but the tenors appeared rather too strong for the basses, in fact for the whole chorus; this occasionally produced the effect of converting the tenor part into the melody to the exclusion of the real melody.

With regard to the chorus work, as a whole it is only fair to say that it was highly creditable to the society and its conductor, and although it is an open question as to whether the lesser numbers (the part songs and short chorusses) are worthy the attention of an ambitious society to the exclusion of more important works. Be

this as it may, our criticism has to deal with what was presented, and not what might have been.

No. 1. The Overture to Semiramide (*Rossini*) was a very uneven performance. The strings were full, and the attack firm and decisive; as much cannot be said of the wood and brass instruments, which, when ever they came into prominence, seemed weak, wavering and uncertain. This gave the effect of a practice rather than a performance. But while thus sharply criticising, our object is not to discourage, for we know the difficulty in obtaining Horn Oboe and Clarionet players in this city or elsewhere in Canada, the demand for them being so small. It then becomes a question, under the circumstances, whether it is better or not to attempt orchestral works at all, or, if deciding to give them, whether it were not better to import an orchestra entire from the States. On the whole we incline to the opinion that it is better to work as much as possible with the material that we have, and, although the results may not be quite so satisfactory, it will tend to encourage and develop home talent, the only error against which care should be taken to guard, is, extravagant laudation. Home talent so rarely hears the truth about itself from either press or friends, that it grows self satisfied, and when self satisfaction takes possession, there is an end of all improvement. Nevertheless, we would not be understood to say that the overture was a failure; on the contra, as a whole the performance was a very enjoyable one, and but for the blemishes to which we refer would have been a perfect one. The Cantata, "Come Let us Sing," opened with solo for Tenor, Mr. Gordon Sheriff sustaining the part. This gentleman's voice is quite unfit to effectively render the music which demands a voice of equal temperament and power. Though much pains had evidently been bestowed upon the study of the part which, be it admitted, was mechanically correct enough, it still lacked artistic finish. The unnecessarily broad pronunciation of many of the English words destroyed the musical effect. For instance, "*I said, 'Tis a people,*" was pronounced "ar sard." This, a systematically prefacing with a nasal sound, words commencing with a vowel, for instance, and being converted into *n'and, I* into *ni*, an unnecessary hanging upon the initial consonant of a syllable and thereby spoiling the vocal sound, are among some of the faults of method which ruin the effects of Mr. Sheriff's singing.

"Ave Maria," this exquisite composition, consisting of *Bachs'* first prelude which forms the harmonic foundation for the beautiful melody superadded by *Gounod* for voice and violin, was sung by Mrs. Cooper, for whose voice it is totally unfit. In the first place, Mrs. Cooper's voice is a low mezzo soprano of very good quality, while the Ave Maria demands a voice of a *ture* soprano. The song begins *piano* on the lower register of the voice, increasing in intensity as it advances, it reaches its climax at high C. This note should be well within the range of the voice, if sung, and not produced by a strained effort, which, conveying to the hearer a sense of pain utterly ruins the effect which it is the intention of the composer to create. Mrs. Cooper (from natural causes) reversed the intention of the composer. The commencement of the song, where the notes lie well within the natural compass of her voice, she sang in full round tones of very pleasing quality, but as the song advanced to the upper register the tones were weak, strained and unnatural, the notes in some places being actually false in intonation. The violin obligato forming the introduction to the song gave Mr. Bayley a fine opportunity as a solo, which, from

nervousness or some other cause, he failed to improve, playing the prelude and obligato correctly but somewhat weakly. Since there is an organ part written, and an organ present, why was the accompaniment omitted? Gounod knew very well that toward the close of the song where violin and voice are in unison that something more than the running notes of the prelude, which from the piano accompaniment, was required to balance the melody.

No. 4. Recit and Aria—"Now Heaven in Fullest Glory Shone," from the Oratorio of the Creation, (*Haydn*) was sung by Mr. Schuch in his usual correct and happy style. Of this gentleman's singing little remains to be said; being a bass he is not troubled with registers to any great extent, the rock upon which so many uncultured singers are wrecked. Beyond this his phrasing is intelligent, and his conception of the music generally, artistic.

No. 5. "Longing" (*Rubinstein*) was sung by Miss Lay, whom (in a notice of the previous concert) we found occasion to criticise rather severely. Whether from more confidence or careful study since, we know not, but a marked improvement is manifest both in method and style, and the number, which, by the bye, is a very lovely one, was pleasingly and agreeably rendered. No. 6, and close of part I of the programme, comprised two part songs, respectively "Cradle Song" and "The Fairies," both by Macfarren. These were exceedingly well rendered by choir, unaccompanied. In reference to these part songs and quite apart from the question mooted at the preamble to this criticism, we desire to correct an impression which we have reason to believe to some extent is in existence with reference to this class of music. The first verse of *The Fairies* is as follows:

"Up the airy mountain, down the rocky glen,  
We daren't go a hunting for fear of little men,  
We folk, good folk, trooping all together,  
Green jacket, red cap, and grey cock's feather."

Now the impression which such lines would (naturally, we admit) create upon the minds of those who are apt to judge the music by the words, would be that the music was simple and frivolous, we wish to say that the words are not necessarily a standard of measurement for the music, and that the highest specimens of musical composition may be wedded to the simplest, and most absurd words. Rameau said he could set the sheets of a newspaper to music, although such a union, to those who understood the language in which the words were sung, would appear ridiculous, one has only to bethink oneself that it would be all right in "Dutch," or some other language which one did not understand, in which case the words are but the means of utterance to musical sounds. Nay, more may be said in favor of fanciful conceits, such as the lines we have quoted; they frequently give rise in the mind of the composer to correspondingly fantastical musical forms which may be as elaborately and artistically worked out as subjects of a more solid character.

No. 7, and first of Part II on the programme, comprised Sir Michael Costa's Secular Cantata for solos, chorus and orchestra. In the ode to the moon, Mrs. Cooper's voice appeared to better advantage, but the defects of her method made themselves even here painfully apparent,—one example will suffice; "So gentle moon, good night," in the word gentle the *ge* were given as close sound of e with strong *flatus* (escape of breath) thus *ge—entle*. Mrs. Maddison sang the part of Mab with her usual care; her voice appeared a little husky which may have been the result of fatigue or a cold.

Her method is very good, and her singing though somewhat lacking in animation never offends. Mr. Schuch sustained the part of Oberon satisfactorily. Mr. Dennison (Tenor) that of the Lover, of whom the same might be said in every respect except that his voice broke badly upon some of the upper notes in the first verse from the effects of which he did not recover during the remainder of the song. Mr. Dennison's voice is fresh and of a pleasing quality of tone, his pronunciation and enunciation very good, and but for the break referred to, his solo would have been an acceptable addition to the programme. The chorusses in this Cantata were especially deserving of commendation, and the orchestral accompaniment was more in repose, being played much more smoothly and effectively than in the former Cantata. No. 8. "Dearest Companions," from *La Sonnambula* Bellini, was sung by Mrs. Morris. This lady's voice is a true soprano of good compass, equal scale and very flexible. As far as the execution of that florid song is concerned, no fault can be found, yet with all it failed to impress as anything beyond a purely mechanical performance. Mrs. Morris exhibited an occasional tendency to sing sharp. No. 9. A part song, unaccompanied, by *Lemmens*, entitled "Drops of Rain," was effectively rendered by the chorus, and was well received by the audience. No. 10. "Lascio Ch'io Pianga," (*Handel*) Recit and Aria, was carefully sung by Miss Maddison. We should have liked a little more declamation in the recitative. As it was, the contrast between the recit and aria was completely lost; in all other respects the number was well rendered. No. 11. "I. Naviganti." (*Randegger*) a trio for soprano, tenor and bass, was rendered by Miss Lay, Mr. Dennison and Mr. Schuch. Mr. Dennison redeemed, in a measure, his damaged reputation, while Miss Lay and Mr. Schuch ably sustained their parts, rendering this well known number one of the most acceptable of the evening. The concert proper concluded with chorus and orchestral accompaniment from Rossini's opera "Cinderella," entitled "Hark! Again the Thrilling Horn," which was vigorously and effectively rendered. The National Anthem, by chorus and orchestra, upon which Mr. Fisher bestows particular care, brought the concert to a close. Miss Boyd, pianist of the Society, rendered efficient service at the piano. The concert, taken as a whole, if not a brilliant success, was yet a creditable and enjoyable affair, and we have faith in the future of this young Society.

#### TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

DEAR SUBSCRIBERS,—Nine months have been passed to the credit sheet of Father Time in his account with Humanity since the pioneer number of our little journal made its appearance among you. Knowing the fate of many a similar enterprise we asked you for your subscription with hesitation. Beginning with our personal friends and acquaintances we met with so much encouragement that we extended our canvass to such of those whom we knew to be favorably disposed to any movement having for its object the advancement of Art Culture in this our young country. The result was so encouraging that we determined to start the journal. Quite a number have, unsolicited and trusting in our ability to continue the journal, forwarded their subscriptions. If those who have not done so will kindly forward to us at 255 Jarvis Street, we shall esteem it a favor and will send receipt with next issue.

Very truly yours,

EDITOR.

## MUSICAL GOSSIP.

The Toronto Choral Society designs to bring out the Oratorio of The Creation next season.

The Philharmonic Society are putting the finishing touches on chorus and orchestral parts of the Oratorio Judas Maccabeus, to be produced at the pavilion of the Horticultural Gardens, on the evening of Tuesday, 7th June.

The Concert by the Normal Class and amateur pupils of The Toronto College of Music, will take place on the evening of Wednesday 22. The chief feature of which will be a new Symphony Overture, comprising four movements—Allegro, Maestoso, Andante, Scherzo and Finale, entitled "Canada." The last movement is founded upon National airs of England, Ireland and Scotland, introducing for the first time, a new Canadian Anthem and concluding with the National Anthem. The Symphony Overture was written for, and dedicated to the members of the Normal Class, year 1881, by whom it will be played, upon four pianos and organ. On the same evening The Medal of Honor and Prizes will be distributed.

## THE ART EXHIBITION.

## A RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

At length the annual festival has come and gone! The feast has been ungrudgingly spread before the public, and if that irresponsible body has not availed itself of the opportunity it is certainly not the fault of the artists of Ontario.

In years gone by, the people have flocked in thousands to gaze with eagerness on the annual result of the efforts of Canada's young but energetic school, sympathetically anxious for the prosperity of native art, and proud of its success, wherever success could be claimed or even hinted at.

This year there can be no question as to the decided progress accomplished, nor two opinions as to the increase of various and interesting subjects brought together upon the Society's walls.

All circumstances favoured it, the date being prior to that of the Royal Canadian Academy meeting, naturally conducing towards the most strenuous efforts on the part of the artists, and the local exhibition coming first would have all the advantage, while the reflection that, failing to dispose of a work here there was still the Academy behind to resort to, while in most cases the purchasers of Ontario would be sure to consent to allow the artist to exhibit his "sold" picture at Halifax.

Seeing then the position, it is somewhat surprising, very discouraging and depressing to the artists, and says but little for the spirit, sincerity or liberality of their so-called patrons, that so deserving an exhibition has been so comparatively neglected by the people of Ontario.

Of course there were a few, alas! how few! "faithful among the faithless found," who were unremitting in their visits, and so far as their means allowed, liberal, even generous in their support; but it cannot be denied that, whatever the cause, the "Ninth Annual Exhibition" has

been, though an artistic success, a deplorable failure financially. It may be that the recovery from bad times has not yet reached the point to make itself felt by artists and other workers in the more luxurious branches of labour.

Portraits, though not numerous in this year's exhibition, were very good, and give good ground to hope that the photographic machine has not quite proven an invincible "foe to graphic art."

It is true that at large exhibitions in a metropolis like London, the general public feel but very little delight in gazing at the "portrait of a gentleman" so often met in old times, absorbing valuable wall space to the exclusion of works possessing greater interest. Here in Toronto, however, it is rather different. In most cases, portraits exhibited will be at once recognized by the majority of visitors, and certainly, in this exhibition, those shown were a decided gain to the collection, both as regards art, merit and variety, besides greatly adding to the "tout ensemble."

Of Mr. Patterson's two, we decidedly preferred that of Professor Croft; it is from life and is lifelike; the artist has represented the man of science busy at his professional work; this, it always seems to us, is the truly practical way of posing the subject. Mr. Patterson has succeeded in rendering the intense absorption of the professor in his occupation. The chemical apparatus, without being laboured, is very cleverly painted, and, unlike the unmeaning paraphernalia of the Photographer's shop, they bear directly upon the subject which it is the desire of the painter to portray and the object of the spectator to comprehend. There was evidently, in this case, no desire on the part of either painter or subject to affect the fine gentleman, or put on a grand air; nothing but a plain statement of a simple story to be made in the most direct and truth-telling manner; "a plain unvarnished tale," such as should go straight to the heart of all friends and acquaintances of the very able gentleman whose semblance it gives us, as did that of the Moor of Venice when told in hearing of the Patrician's daughter.

The public ought to learn, (and by being shewn is the only way in which it can be taught), that a portrait at its best means something beyond a mere map or even topographical chart of the form and features. It should penetrate the surface and suggest the mind and soul within. Mr. Patterson is yet a young man, his powers have yet to be developed, at least such would be the natural inference, and we say this without the least detriment to the excellence of his work so lately shown; but only to premise that if he be so able now, what may we not hope to see from his hand when steadied and strengthened by the practise and experience of more mature years; when repeated experiments, assiduous efforts, aye, and as comes to all, *repeated failures*, have each done their part towards perfecting the brilliant natural abilities with which his youth has been endowed, and which already shadow forth such promise of honors yet to be won.

Mr. Harris, another Canadian, born upon the breezy coast of our Island of Prince Edward, is an artist still young, but more mature than Mr. Patterson; he is one, too, who evinces a greater amount of that power which can only come from severe study and patient training in the best

schools, and which, if an artist lack, it is not too much to say, that he must enter the arena to contend for popular favour very heavily handicapped; at all events, more especially will such be the case with the figure or historical painter; and these are the walks in which all artists who would live in ages to come must strive to tread. In Canada, it is true, there will be much history recorded by the faithful landscape painter of our generation; for this century will see immense and radical changes effected in the aspect of lakeside and hill, valley and plain, and where the hemlock and cedar now wave in soft but melancholy sighings of the breeze, the well tilled field, the smiling meadow, and the garden flowers will bloom and smile, grateful to the fostering hand of man, whose care and labour will enrich, though the wilder and more weird beauty of the forest glade be by him destroyed for ever.

At present, however, we must now leave our short review of the portrait and figure display in the exhibition just closed, and must notice, so far as our limited space will permit, Mr. Harris' more than fine and beautiful work.

This gentleman's portrait of "Murial" is a bright little study *en vignette* of a child's head, whose sweet infantine expression and fresh and cheering face brought many a joyous flush to the cheeks of lady visitors young and old, causing frequent exclamations of delight, and doubtless often raising a strong desire to obtain a like souvenir of the fleeting childhood now so rapidly passing over the loved heads of son, daughter or younger brother or sister. The portrait of Mr. Burnside was about as near what one would wish for in a portrayal of a business or public man as it could be; there is that something beyond and beneath the mere skin surface which so plainly bespeaks the living, thinking and working mind within. It is not inert, dead, or falling asleep, but startles the spectator, who cannot help feeling that from those eyes of paint (which do not seem paint) real sight and living glance was bent upon him, and that the lips might at any moment give forth the well remembered tone which should correspond with the facial expression so familiar in the breathing original. In this picture the drapery and surroundings are all kept in strict subordination, and serve, as they should serve, chiefly to support that fountain of honour—the head.

Two heads by this artist, the "Asphæte man" and that of a sailor which he calls "a study," are both very strong and lifelike; perhaps, for mere *chiaroscuro* and realistic rendering, the former may have the advantage, and truly it must be said that the head here placed on the canvas was one which once seen would not quickly be forgotten. Yet, real as it is, subtle as is its interpretation of character, as a truly great work of art it will have to yield the palm to the "Study"

We use the work *great* advisedly and not in the mere clap-trap manner in which reviewers are too apt to squander their ultimate terms. We use it in the full consciousness that it is a word which in art-language must be sparingly (alas! how sparingly!) employed. Work may be clever, promising, pleasing, yes, beautiful, and, even in Canada, we often find it so, but it is seldom *great*. Greatness is a scarce commodity, and not to be bought with gold, nor hunted up by busy feet to be placed at the nod and

beck of either Prince or purple. It is the outcome of that subtle, hidden force planted by the Divine hand of our mighty Creator, with an all-wise and jealous view to its scarcity; only here and there among men, doubtless, so that it may retain its value through all time. At the risk of being thought extravagant and over enthusiastic it is not too much to say that at least Mr. Harris' "Study" has more of this Divine attribute than any work which has yet been seen in our country, and we are much mistaken if greater triumphs in wider fields be not in store for this son of Canada, if unhappily for us he be induced to leave our land to seek fame and fortune under a foreign flag.

The "Study" was one of a manly head, not bowed, but clouded with a sad melancholy, betokening disappointed hopes, dying and dead within the manly breast, so clearly though simply depicted by this artist's hand, whose mind seems to have laboured solely to portray the mental aspect rather than the mere personal contour. The face is noble, and seemingly used to honest toil, of powerful physique, but in no wise fallen or gross, sad, and resigned, but not hopeless, grieved, but not embittered; and there is in the eyes an undefinable something which makes one feel that through those orbs a spirit longs and partially suffers in a degree as did, two thousand years ago, that master soul on Calvary.

We have written the foregoing in the full knowledge that many of our readers will find it very hard to accept in full faith, and we are quite prepared to endure the scepticism which such very strong encomiums may call forth, being well aware that many minds will be ready to conclude that enthusiasm has warped our judgment.

We have only space to add that Mr. Jardine, whose name appears in the catalogue as the owner of the picture is to be warmly congratulated upon his acquisition of so sterling a work of art.

There are several other works by Mr. Harris in the exhibition, which we cannot here possibly notice. Of these a scene on the fishing coast "Landing a Lobster Catch," was reviewed in a former number of THE ARION. "The Fiddler," reminds us of Murills, and if met with unexpectedly in a strange place, once for the first time, would be readily attributed to that master. Both these works and others would furnish us with abundant material for interesting descriptive writing were space at command, but circumstances compel us on, and the next artist we come to is Mrs. Schreiber, (like Mr. Harris an R. C. A.) This lady has done well, though, perhaps, not quite equal to her "Christabel," "Monks of St. Bernard," "Oliva," and others we could name. Let us hope that this really clever artist does not feel the loss of her art-surroundings of former years so severely as to cause her to lose heart. There is real reason why this should be the case, if Academies be not so plentiful, nature's school is always nigh. And beyond a doubt, Mrs. Schreiber possesses the power to take and use the lessons which nature gives, to the confounding of all other schools and teachers, be they clerical or lay. Let it not be thought, however, that there was nothing good by this lady on the Ontario Society's walls, for much of her old power displays itself in "Touch me if you dare," and several other works. "A trial of patience," is a capital

idea, in many respects well carried out, but it lacks that judicious balancing of the force of shadows, that incisive marking, that—shall we say it?—snap which would make it a really good picture, such as one would long to possess. It may be the lighting and various accommodations of Mrs. Schreiber's painting room are defective; if so, would it be presumptuous to suggest that they be altered, for it can not be economy for a lady of Mrs. Schreiber's ability (and it is not small) to enter the lists weighted down by mere mechanical disadvantages.

One of the student's of the Ontario School of Art, Mr. J. C. Pinkey, contributed a study of a lady, which he calls "The Leisure Hour." The title role is well acted out, and the drawing and *chiaroscuro* are good, squarely treated, firmly painted and full of promise for this young gentleman's future career as an artist, as well as doing much credit to the teaching he has received in the school.

Two bust portraits of ladies by Mr. Perre, give unmistakable proof of his power in other paths than his chosen one of landscape.

One more picture brings us to the end of the figure paintings. It is "Nearly through," by T. M. Martin. Of this it is only necessary to say that the still-life portion of the picture is admirably executed, and in this gentleman's well known style, but the subject is repulsive, the proportion bad, and we turn from it with regret, all the more keenly felt, that so much skill should be worse than wasted in so mistaken a channel.

The limits of this periodical necessarily forbids us to conclude our notice of the Exhibition in this number, so we will hold over our criticism of the landscapes and still-life, etc., both in oil and water colours until next month; while in closing this article, we would touch upon a matter which has been brought to our notice in respect to our remarks in last month's issue upon Picturesque Canada. The management of the illustration of this work informs us that they are doing everything which can be done to use the work of Canadians as far as can be made compatible, with the production of a work which shall be of first-class quality, and, that this, of course, includes technical excellence, such as shall make it at least equal to, if not better than any work of the kind previously published. They have, too, been lately looking up afresh the material within their reach, and which comprises many scenes by several of our well known names. Let us here say, too, that we never intended to insinuate that the publishers were not acting in good faith, but simply to urge upon them the desirability of making it as "truly natural" as possible, and also to warn them of the use which would surely be made by enemies of their enterprise, of any seeming omission which could possibly be twisted to its discredit. We are also informed that the printing is to be done in Toronto, on two expensive presses, imported for the purpose and specially manufactured for fine wood cut printing, and these will be available for the printing of other illustrated works, which could not previously be done in Canada for want of such facilities.

Much of the engraving is being done here, several engravers of high reputation having been induced by this work to make Toronto their residence, though, of course, this need not prevent artists having their drawings cut by any

of the best engravers in England or the United States, whom they may themselves select. Should this be fully carried out, and we have every faith that it will, the gain to the art interests here must be great and lasting, and the Art Publishing Company will deservedly win the gratitude of the profession.

The Second Annual Meeting of the Royal Canadian Academy, is to be signalized by its being the first occasion on which Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise will appear in public on her return to this country, and is expected to be a very interesting affair. There will be just time to gather up the fragments here and put things in order before shipping the contributions of the Artists of Ontario to the Ancient Capital of Nova Scotia. This will be important, as by far the largest and most important will go from Toronto.

### COMMUNICATION.

To the Editor of THE ARION.

SIR,—To your editorial remarks on my letter in this month's number of THE ARION, allow me to make the following reply: You state "that I occupy the seemingly nominal position of a Professor's Chair at the University of Trinity College." I was appointed to the position by the same authorities and in the same manner as the other professors received their appointments. The fact of not having more actual duty to perform is no fault of mine. I can do nothing more than express my readiness to give lectures, or examine for degrees when required. I may state that I have received communications from parties in town and out of it, saying that they would wish to take a degree, but when I informed them of the examination required, there the matter ended. Since you are now aware that a degree can be obtained, I hope you will soon inform me of your desire to go through the ordeal necessary to attain it. You say also "that I have not been slow to utilize in my outside professional work, to its utmost value, the position that the said chair of Music in the University has given me." This does not seem to agree very well with what you say at the beginning of your remarks, viz.: that you never heard of the said Chair of Music, or the power of conferring degrees in music, existing in the University. If I had utilized my position to such an extent as you say in my professional work, surely you would have heard of it. Again, you say "you find that unless the dollars are forthcoming, there is nothing in return for this position." I am not ashamed to confess that I had to earn the sustenance necessary for myself and family by my profession, and that (at the yielding to no one my desire for its advancement) I required remuneration for services granted, and in this respect follow the example of those who have done most for the art. If you have reached the point of giving your services gratuitously for the love of the cause, I think all will admit that you are indeed a *rara avis*, but I must confess (in conclusion of my further correspondence) that I am always suspicious of such services granted, as they are generally either worth nothing, or else there is some sinister motive lurking behind.

Yours, &c.,

GEO. W. STRATHY, Music Doctor.

Professor of Music at the University of Trinity College, Toronto.

TORONTO, 30th May, 1881.