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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 our February number we suggested the establishment of a Chair of Music at one of our larger Universities. We were not aware at the time that such a Chair existed, and, that the power to grant degrees in music is vested in the University of Trinity College, but from an article which appears in this month's number of *Rouge et Noir*, and which we reprint, it seems that such is the case. It is eminently fit and proper that a University with a Theological course should give consideration to the higher study of Music, since music enters so largely into and occupies so important a place in the service of religion. But it also appears that the power has never been utilized. That the chair only exists in name, that no one has ever graduated, and that lectures are unknown.

In the early days of our country when cities and churches were small, and organs were few, and the art feeling and culture of the people more rude than at the present time, there may have been an excuse for neglecting this branch of esthetical study, but that excuse will not hold good any longer. Neither in its physical nor esthetical aspect is our country the same to-day as it was forty years ago. Other nations are properly proud of their schools of Art and of Music, and by encouraging and fostering their native talent have developed men who have shed lustre upon the land of their birth or adoption. It may be argued by the utilitarian that Music and Art are luxurient exotics without which the world could get on very well; to such a one we have nothing to say, further than that the same thing might be just as truly said of every other thing on earth save the plainest diet and the coarsest clothes. Poetry, painting, sculpture, classical literature, designing, and in fact everything that distinguishes a civilized from a barbarous race might be regarded in the same light. As suggested in the article referred to, by all means let us have an awakening on the subject. Where are our public spirited men? Must it ever be a reproach to Canada that muscle shall be more highly accounted than brains? But to return to the subject more directly under consideration *i. e.* a degree in music. That a decree in music will not supply the place of ability we readily concede, but in the ranks of the musical profession there are a large number of able and conscientious men, men who have spent the best years of their lives in acquiring their professions, and whom modesty deters from presumption, whose positions are usurped and emoluments absorbed by a still larger class whose ignorance is only equalled by their assurance. For the protection of the former as well as the public who spend so much money on music in one form or another, have an examination in different grades, inexpensive and open to all. To what better purpose could the power which the University of Trinity possesses be put to examine candidates than to grant degrees according to merit, thus standing as an arbiter and judge between the real and the counterfeit; between the discernment of the public and conflicting claims of the profession, whereby both would be benefitted.

MUCH indignation is felt among members of the musical profession at the publication in the *Globe* of the following absurd letter. Whoever the writer was, is of not the slightest consequence, but it is simply a disgrace to a paper of the *Globe's* standing, and a shame to the city, that it should have found a place in the columns of that journal. To our certain knowledge at least two letters in reply were written, one of which was sent to the *Globe* and refused, the other to the *Telegram*, which was also declined. The latter we print, in the hope that the outspoken challenge which it contains may elicit the truth. If Mr. Clarke wrote or inspired the letter, he merits the approbrium of every honorable man for resorting to such an unworthy trick to impose upon the public, and thereby obtain an undue advantage over his professional confreres. If some zealous friend of Mr. Clarke's is the author, he may find that his meddlesome and ignorant interference will not benefit the cause he sought to advance. However, with such a state of things possible, *real* merit modestly waiting for public recognition may wait in vain, until at length disgusted and discouraged, it seeks as many a one has already done in other professions than that of music, a place where more *intelligent* justice will reward their efforts and stimulate them to still greater exertions to the credit and benefit of the community in which they live and work.

(*To the Editor of the Globe.*)

SIR,—I am pleased to see by a card in Saturday's *Globe* that Dr. Clarke, the well-known organist and musical author, is about to begin the second half term of his "Institute." In listening to him frequently at the Jarvis street church, as one who appreciates and loves artistic music, I have been thoroughly delighted. He interprets the ancient and modern masters grandly, and uses much of his own composition. A clergyman in Boston, in whose church he was organist, remarks that Dr. Clarke is the only man he ever met who could thoroughly carry out and fasten the sentiment of a hymn and the subject of a sermon. He makes his organ say anything—joy, sorrow, agony, triumph, sympathy, sadness, glory—all find appropriate expression through his wonderful mastery of the instrument.

For the benefit of those who may not have had the opportunity of knowing the early history of Dr. Clarke I cull the following from the New York *Musical Review* and other

sources:—"Dr. Clarke was born in Boston, Mass. Both father and mother possessed marked musical tastes. At the age of seven years he began to play on several musical instruments, having an intuitive perception of their scales and characteristics, and at the age of nine he had learned to read music so that he could record his musical thoughts, beginning at that time to write sacred music, with the different parts, and also melodies for the violin which he had learned to play.

Inheriting also a natural mechanical genius Dr. Clarke mastered the entire construction of the pipe organ, both in its mechanism and musical character, which has given him a superior command in the management of its multiplied resources. His book of instruction for the organ, known as "Clarke's New Method for Reed Organs," has become so popular that the sale of the book has been unprecedented, reaching nearly one hundred thousand copies. I visited his institute twice, and was impressed with the easy method of teaching, the amount of common sense brought into play, and the facility with which all read his music. I have also heard from his private pupils in vocal and instrumental music of his skill in developing their abilities without forcing. He leads his pupils to a taste of high art, combined with naturalness of expression. One course of instruction with him will, I believe, be found worth years of plodding with many other teachers. I sincerely trust we may be able to help him in Toronto, as he is a real acquisition to the musical circles of the city. Yours respectfully,

March 10, 1881. A LOVER OF MUSIC.

THE "GLOBE" AND A "LOVER OF MUSIC."

A letter appeared in the *Globe* of March 11th, signed "A Lover of Music," the substance of which is simply a panegyric upon Dr. (?) Clarke, the organist of Jarvis St. Baptist Church. The letter in itself is as ignorant of art as it is absurd and untruthful. To begin with, I deny that Mr. Clarke has any right, that we recognize in Canada, to the title of Doctor, and I challenge "Lover of Music" to prove that he has. Secondly, I deny that "Lover of Music" appreciates or understands artistic music by frequently listening to it at the Jarvis St. Baptist Church. I deny that Mr. Clarke interprets the ancient and modern masters *grandly*, "and if by the ancient and modern masters is meant the classical works of the great masters, I unhesitatingly state that he cannot play them at all, and challenge "Lover of Music" to prove otherwise." It is certain that at no time, either on his own organ, or at any of the public organ recitals which he has given in Canada, has Mr. Clarke played one redeeming piece of the legitimate organ school. All that petty twaddle about his wonderful precocity at the age of seven is of no public interest, and reads like an advertising dodge to help the sale of a book. "Lover of Music" then says: "I visited his institute twice, and was impressed with the easy method of teaching * * * * and the facility with which all read *his* music." "He leads his pupil to a taste for high art, combined with naturalness of expression." I am at a loss to understand the meaning of this paragraph, but it shows clearly enough that the writer is not in his proper element when attempting a letter on Musical Art. The fact of the matter lies in a nut-shell. Mr. Clarke is a fair musician, an ordinarily good organist (who indulges in trick and jugglery), no pianist at all, and a composer of very mediocre ability. His own compositions, referred to by "Lover of Music," are pretty but insignificant as works of art. His book, in the main, is a clever compilation of other men's compositions, and as such deserves credit, but no more. With all the wonderful powers, "intuitive, perceptions of scales, chromatic passages, &c., with which the writer accredits him, we have a right to expect some substantial token that he has made good use of the exceptional powers, and produced some *Oratorio*, *Cantata*, *Opera*, or *Symphony*, but so far as I can learn this evidence is entirely wanting. As to "Lover of Music's" individual taste, I have nothing to say. The ass likes the thistle and we all know why. But when the *Globe*, forgetful of the power it possesses to foster or to injure the public taste for true art, allows its columns to be subordinated to tricks of this kind, it really becomes a matter of public interest that the truth should be known, and if "Lover of Music" cannot refute my statements they must stand unimpeached. NO DOCTOR.

OUR MUSICAL DEGREE.

The fact that the University of Trinity College has the power of granting a degree in music, the only genuine degree indeed to be had in the country, seems to be one of those strange half forgotten legends which descend to us from that *Ultimate dim Thule*, when the College was first set upon its infant legs by its energetic founders, and taught the useful art of creeping, from which unassuming mode of progress it appears never to have ventured to stray: legends which are known only to those faithful and steadfast souls who have the energy to burrow into the secrets of that most mysterious of things—the College Council. Nevertheless, be it known to you, readers, we have a chair and a degree in music. But where are the names of our graduates on the list? There is not one! And yet, if our opportunities in this branch had been made the most of, if we had had from the beginning an enterprising faculty, an able and energetic professor, and a wide spread and careful advertisement of our degree-granting power we might by this time have had a body of graduates who would have exercised a marked influence in the musical history of our country. But, instead of that, the whole matter is veiled in profound obscurity; while we have gone on majestically dreaming, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, we have neglected a grand opportunity. No measures appear ever to have been taken to make any practical use of our power. We have no lectures—no examination—no degree—no one knows anything about it. We are destitute even of the slight pretense of activity in this direction which was organized as having an existence last year. Everybody knows what an inestimable benefit, leaving the degree out of the question, a thorough practical training in the rudimentary branches of music would be to our Divinity Class. 'Tis never too late to mend, especially in our case. Even now if active measures were taken towards making this degree a reality, instead of a scarce remembered fable, a great power might be raised to our assistance in an entirely new—and, we think, entirely promising branch, an attraction which

would surely bring many to us, and, in course of time, enable Trinity men to take their place in the foremost ranks of the musical societies of Canada. Indeed, our musical faculty would perhaps become our principal stand by. Instead of the slight and very questionable fame which, however undeserved it may be, we possess throughout the country at present our musical graduates by filling organist's positions, and spreading far and wide an able and thorough system of teaching, might carry the name and good reputation of their University into places where it has never even been heard of. What a benefit it would be to the country at large to be provided with a *bona fide* degree, granted for a certain proficiency in music which should be tested by regular and uniform examinations, instead of being exposed, as it is to a lamentable extent, to the quackery of ignorant impostors who, in the absence of such a decree, usurp the places which should be filled by able and carefully instructed men. Trinity has missed an opportunity, such a one as she will probably never have again, but even yet, though our chances are small compared with what they were, an active move in this direction might accomplish a great deal. Why is this move not made? It is surely high time. We have a nominal faculty; we have a professor Yet we have seen nothing of him this year. Is it that he is not sufficiently backed up by the authorities, or that his age and health incapaciate him for the active fulfilment of his office? It is a responsible position—one that might be made much of. There are many of the best musicians in the country who, we imagine, would jump at the chance of obtaining such a position as the professorship of music in Trinity College, a position, the need, the necessity, of which is so urgently and widely recognized among musical circles in Canada, and which for this reason they could turn to such excellent account both for their own fame and that of the institution with which they might be connected. The remedying of this would gain for us a universal esteem and respect which we have never yet won, and which seems to be as far away from us now as ever. This is a matter which should recommend itself to the careful consideration of the active friends of the College.—*Rouge et Noir.*

LAWS OF LIGHT, SOUND, AND MUSIC.

There is an analogy between the laws that govern the progress of sound, light and water. Sound, in its uniformity of speed and in its decay by radiation, resembles light; but, in its mode of deflection, reflection and absorption, it partly resembles light and partly water. But sound, like water, can be conducted by tubes, &c., as light cannot. Light travels in straight lines from its source, and consists of distinct impulses succeeding one another and forming waves. In this it is like sound also. But light travels through both ponderable and imponderable media, as ether or air, while sound can only be transmitted through media whose weight and consequent inertia are always modifying the motions it makes. Otherwise light would appear to be sound at a greater elevation, just as ordinary motion is sound at a greater depth. For if we hear a series of taps which we can count, or whose speed we can estimate, and multiply the number of such taps per second by two and the product by two again, and so on (each operation causing an elevation of one octave), an audible musical tone is soon reached. For the practical range o musical sounds is comprised between 40 and 4,000 vibrations per second. Proceeding, however, with the multiplication, we reach a speed where the super harmonies or the musician's tones affect sensitive flames, and subsequently vibrations corresponding with heat, color, light and electricity. As regards reflection, however, both analogies hold good, as far as regards sound and light and water. In light the angle of incidence is equal to the angle of reflection. But waves of water, when they strike at a more acute angle than 45 degrees are not perfectly reflected. When they strike at a more acute angle than 30 degrees they seem to travel along the bank or other surface against which they had struck. Waves of sound, however, are not only reflected, but also irradiated, and often reinforced by the sympathetic vibrations of bodies they strike, and are also transmitted. Hence arises the phenomenon of conduction of sound.

MUSIC AND POETRY.

The chief ethical value of a well written instrumental composition (such as the so called "Moonlight Sonata," by Beethoven) is this: it embodies and perpetuates the emotions experienced by the writer, and enables him to reveal them to others, thus enlarging their sympathies.

We daily strive to impart to one another our souls states by the use of ordinary language, and cannot fail to bewail its inadequency whether in writing or in speech.

The young lover finds in the dictionary of the English tongue three times as many words expressive of pain as of pleasure. He cannot invent a new word; therefore he begins to poetize, and tries, by a more highly artistic arrangement of words than the usual prose, to impart his joys.

Poetry, however, fails him, for he cannot here find all that meets his requirements. His rhythm is hampered with the sluggishly spoken word, his rhyme is comparatively a childish jingle.

Music here lends its aid. It is free, like the soul. It is independent of words, and may acquire a speed at which their utterance would be impossible, or at least become a serious clog. It provides ever new expressions that cannot be catalogued.

Its rhymes are grand sweeping cadences, or—corresponding, answering strains that so far transcend the periods of speech as to make the mere comparison appear ridiculous.

Therefore, where poetry ends, music begins. It takes the poetic rhyme and measure and vocal inflections, and develops, idealizes, and elaborates them, and thus produces ravishing melodies, soul-stirring harmonies, and rhythmic forms (musical feet) of marvelous variety, complexity and symmetry

THE NEW DIRECTORY OF MUSIC.

The twelfth number of Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," which completes the second part of this valuable epitome of musical knowledge, has recently been issued from the press of Macmillan & Co. It is from Palestrina to plain song, and therefore includes pianoforte, pianoforte music, pianoforte playing and pianists, which tend to make this number valuable to general readers; for no instrument is so universally found or has so large a literature or varied styles of performance, or as great a number of executants.

Speaking of the various schools of pianoforte playing that

have arisen during the past hundred years, it refers to those of Mozart (*les pianistes harmonistes*), and Clementi (*les pianistes brilliants*), which were thus distinguished in 1780. Then Beethoven's compositions, that partook somewhat of the style of both schools, 1790—1800. With Maria von Weber romantic expression was a principal feature, and Franz Schubert inclined more toward the lyrical style. But from 1830 to 1840 the technical school was in the ascendant. This school attained subsequently its highest point of excellence in the performances of Liszt and Rubinstein. Mendelssohn and Schumann meanwhile diverted attention by their poetical and classical tendencies, while the refined and polished Chopin reintroduced a sweet, supple and singing style.

Under the head of "Pandean Pipes" reference is made to the soapstone instrument of the Peruvians, which contains eight pipes bored in the solid block and quaintly ornamented. Four of these have small lateral finger holes, which, when closed, lower the pitch one semitone. Thus twelve notes in all can be produced.

ANECDOTES.

SALVATOR ROSA'S HARPSICHORD.

Salvator Rosa's confidence in his powers was as frankly confessed as it was justified by success. Happening one day to be found by a friend, in Florence, in the act of modulating on a very old harpsichord, he was asked how he could keep such an instrument in his house. "Why," said his friend, "it is not worth a scudo." "I will lay what you please," said Salvator, "that it shall be worth a thousand before you see it again." A bet was made, and Rosa immediately painted a landscape with figures on the lid, which was not only sold for a thousand scudos, but was esteemed a capital performance. On one end of the harpsicord he also painted a skull and music books. Both these pictures were exhibited in the year 1823 at the British Institution.

CHANGES OF THE ARTIST.

The Grand Duke of Tuscany was amusing himself one day with beholding Peter de Cortona, while engaged in painting a picture, which represented an infant shedding tears of distress. "I am now going," said the artist, "to make a change in this figure." Accordingly he gave a stroke with his pencil, instantly the same child appeared laughing with the best grace in the world. Presently by another touch, he restored the picture to its former state. "You see," cried the painter, "what trifles make children laugh or weep."

A GENTLE HIT.

If Weber had continued to compose for our theatres, he would probably have succeeded in chastening and improving the style of our singers. On one occasion, at a rehearsal, he said: "I am very sorry you take so much trouble." "O, not at all," was the reply. "Yes," he added, "but I say yest—dat is, for why you take de trouble to sing so many notes dat are not in the book."

TRANSGRESSION AND SIN.

Handel, having occasion to bring out one of his oratorios in a provincial town in England, began to look about for such material to complete his orchestra and chorus as the place might afford. One and another was recommended, as usual, as being a splendid singer, a great player, &c.

After a while, such as were collectable were gathered in a room, and after preliminaries Handel himself made his appearance, puffing under both arms full of manuscript. "Gentlemen," said he, "You all read music?" "Yes, yes," resounded from all parts of the room. "We play in the church," added one old gentleman behind a violoncello. "Very well, play *dis*," said Handel, distributing the parts. This done, and a few explanations delivered. Handel retired to a distant part of the room to enjoy the *effect*.

The stumbling, blundering and fumbling that ensued is said to be indescribable. Handel's sensitive ear and impetuous spirit could not long brook the insult, and clapping his hands to his ears, he ran to the old gentleman of the violoncello, and shaking his fist furiously at those two terrified individuals, said: "You play in de *church!*—very well, you may play in de *church*—for we read, 'De Lord is long suffering and of great kindness, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.' You sal play in de church—but you sal not play for *me!*" and snatching together his manuscripts, he rushed out of the room, leaving the astonished performers to draw their own conclusions.

ROSSINI.

The "Swan of Pesaro" is a name linked with some of the most charming musical associations of this age. Though forty years' silence made fruitless what should have been the richest creative period of Rossini's life, his great works poured forth with such facility, and still retaining their grasp in spite of all changes in public opinion, stamp him as being the most gifted composer ever produced by a country so fecund in musical geniuses. The old set forms of Italian opera had already yielded in large degree to the energy and pomp of French declamation when Rossini poured into them afresh such exhileration and sparkle as again placed his country in the van of musical Europe. With no pretension to the grand, majestic, and severe, his fresh and delightful melodies flowing without stint, excited alike the critical and the unlearned into a species of artistic craze a mania which has not yet subsided. The stiff and stately Oublicheff confesses with many compunctions of conscience, that, when listening for the first time to one of Rossini's operas, he forgot for the time being all that he had ever known, admired, played or sung, for he was musically drunk, as with champagne. Learned Germans might shake their heads and talk about shallowness and contrapuntal rubbish, his *crescendo* and *stretto* passages; his tameness and uniformity even in melody; his want of artistic finish; but, as Richard Wagner, his direct antipodes, frankly confesses in his "Opera and Drama," Such objections were dispelled by Rossini's opera-airs, as if they were mere delusions of the fancy. Essentially different from Beethoven, Bach, Mozart, Hadyn, or even Weber, with whom he has some affinities, he stands an unique figure in the history of art, and original both as man and musician.

Gioacchino Rossini was the son of a town trumpeter and an operatic singer of inferior rank, born in Pesaro Romagna, Feburary 29th, 1792. The child attended the itinerant couple in their visits to fairs and musical gatherings, and was in danger at the age of seven of becoming a thorough paced little vagabond, when maternal alarm trusted his education to the friendly hands of the music master Prinetti. At this tender age even, he had been introduced to the world of art, for he sang the part of a child at the Bologna opera. "Nothing," said Mme. Georgi Righetti, "could be imagined more tender, more touching, than the voice and action of this remarkable child."

The young Rossini after a year or two came under the notice of the celebrated teacher Tesei, of Bologna, who gave him lessons in pianoforte playing and the voice, and obtained him a good place as boy soprano at one of the churches. He now attracted the attention of the Countess Perticari, who admired his voice, and she sent him to the Lyceum to learn fugue and counterpoint at

the feet of a very strict Gamaliel, Padre Mattei. The youth was no dull student, and in spite of his capricious indolence, which vexed the soul of his tutor, he made such rapid progress, that, at the age of sixteen he was chosen to write the cantata, annually awarded to the most promising student. Success greeted the juvenile effort, and thus we see Rossini fairly launched as a composer of the earlier operas which he poured out for five years. It is not needful to speak, except, that one of them so pleased the austere Marshal Massena, that he exempted the composer from conscripton. The first opera which made Rossini's name famous through Europe was "Tancredi," written for the Venetian public. To this opera belongs the charming "Di tanti Palpiti," written under the following circumstances: Mme. Melanotte, the *prima donna* took the whim during the final rehearsal that she would not sing the opening air, but must have another. Rossini went home in sore disgust, for the whole opera was likely to be put off by this caprice. There were but two hours before the performance. He sat waiting for his macaroni when an exquisite air came into his head, and it was written in five minutes.

After his great success he received offers from almost every town in Italy, each clamouring to be served first. Every manager was required to furnish his theatre with an opera from the pen of the new idol. For these essays he received a thousand francs each, and he wrote five or six a year. Stendhall, Rossini's spirited biographer gives a picturesque account of life in the Italian theatres at this time, a status which remains in some of its features to-day.

"The mechanism is as follows: The manager is frequently one of the most wealthy and considerable persons of the little town he inhabits. He forms a company consisting of *prima donna*, *tenoro*, *basso*, *cantante*, *basso buffo*, a second female singer, and a third *basso*. The *libretto* or poem, is purchased for sixty or eighty francs from some unlucky son of the muses, who is generally a half starved abbe, the hanger on of some rich family in the neighbourhood. The character of the parasite so admirably painted by Terence, is still to be found in all its glory in Lombardy, where the smallest town can boast of some five or six families of some wealth. A *maestro* or composer, is then engaged to write a new opera, and he is obliged to adapt his own airs to the voices and capacity of the company. The manager intrusts the care of the financial department to a *registrario*, who is generally some pettifogging attorney who holds the position of his steward. The next thing that generally happens is, that the manager falls in love with the *prima donna*, and the progress of this important armour gives ample employment to the curiosity of the gossips.

The company thus organized at length gives its first representation after a month of cabals and intrigues which furnish conversation for the town of the importance of which the residents of large places can form no idea. During months together a population of eight or ten thousand people do nothing but discuss the merits of the forthcoming music and singers with the eager impetuosity which belong to the Italian character and climate. The first representation if successful, is generally followed by twenty or thirty more of the same piece, after which the company breaks up.

From this little sketch of theatrical arrangements in Italy some idea may be formed of the life which Rossini led from 1810 to 1816. Between these years he visited all the principal towns, remaining three or four months at each, the idolized guest of the *dilettanti* of the place. Rossini's idleness and love of good cheer always made him procrastinate his labours till the last moment, and placed him in dilemmas from which only his fluency of composition extricated him.

His biographer says:—"The day of performance is fast approaching, and yet he cannot resist the pressing invitations of these friends to dine with them at the tavern. This, of course, leads to a supper, the champagne circulates freely, and the hour of morning steals on apace. At length a compunctiousing visit shoots across the mind of the truant composer. He rises abruptly; his friends insist on seeing him home; and they parade the silent streets bareheaded, shouting in chorus whatever comes uppermost, perhaps a portion of a *miserere* to the great scandal of pious Catholics tucked snugly in their beds. At length he reaches his lodgings, and shutting himself up in his chamber is, at this, to every day mortals, most ungenial hour, visited by some of his most brilliant inspirations. These he hastily scratches down on scraps of paper, and next morning arranges them, or in his own phrase, instruments them amid the renewed interruptions of his visitors. At length the important night arrives. The *maestro* takes his place at the pianoforte. Theatre is overflowing, people having flocked to the town from ten leagues distance. Every inn is crowded, and those unable to get other accommodations encamp around the theatre in their various vehicles. All business is suspended, and during the performances the town has the appearance of a desert. The passions, the anxieties, the very life of a whole population are centered in the theatre.

Rossini would preside at the first three representations, and, after receiving a grand civic banquet, set out for the next place, his portmanteau fuller of music paper than of other effects, and perhaps a dozen sequins in his pocket. His love for jesting during these gay Bohemian wanderings made him perpetrate innumerable practical jokes, not sparing himself when he had no more available food for mirth. On one occasion, in travelling from Ancona to Reggio he passed himself off for a musical professor, a mortal enemy of Rossini, and sang the words of his own operas to the most execrable music in a cracked voice, to show his superiority to that donkey Rossini. An unknown admirer of his was in such a rage that he was on the point of chastising him for slandering the great musician about whom Italy raved.

Our composer's earlier style was quite simple and unadorned, a fact difficult for the present generation, only acquainted with the florid beauties of his later works to appreciate. Rossini only followed the traditions of Italian music in giving singers full opportunity to embroider the naked score at their own pleasure. He was led to change this practice by the following incident. The tenor singer Velluti was then the favourite of the Italian theatres, and indulged in the most unwarrantable tricks with his composers. During the first performance of "L'Aureliano" at Naples, the singer loaded the music with such ornaments that Rossini could not recognize the offspring of his own brains. A fierce quarrel ensued between the two, and the composer determined thereafter to write music of such a character that the most stupid singer could not suppose any adornment needed. From that time the Rossini music was marked by its florid and brilliant embroidery. Of the same Velluti spoken above an incident is told, illustrating the musical craze of the country and the period. A Milanese gentleman, whose father was very ill, met his friend in the street. "Where are you going?" "To the Scala to be sure." "How! your father lies at the point of death." "Yes! yes! I know, but Velluti sings to-night."—*Geo. T. Ferris.*

STUDIO NOTES.

This is the season at which the artists begin to take stock of their winter's work, and the studios are overhauled with a view to ascertaining what is available for the Spring Exhibitions. Up to this time of writing it has not been possible to visit all these silent workers in their lofty dens, but enough has been seen by us to warrant the assertion that their will certainly be no falling off, but, on the contrary, a very decided improvement on the displays of former years. The members of the Ontario Society of Artists intend opening their Annual Exhibition early in May, thus getting the start this year of the Royal Canadian Academy, which holds its Second Annual Meeting at Halifax, in July next, when His Excellency and Her Royal Highness intend to open it in person. The Toronto Exhibition will thus have the advantage of being first and placing the newest works before us. However, the great distance of the two places from each other will cause this to be of little detriment to the grand gathering in midsummer. It is hoped Mr. O'Brien will show us his picture of Quebec which he has been painting during the winter for Her Majesty. This is a fine picture, showing the harbour of the "Ancient Capital" crowded with shipping, and suggests all the movement and stir of a busy seaport. Among the vessels are noticable the splendid flagship of Admiral McClintock and the other vessels of his fleet, also one of the fine steamers of the Allan Line is most truthfully portrayed.

The time is that at which the sunset gun is heard, and the smoke wreaths curl around Cape Diamond. One almost fancies he hears the muttered thunder from the bristling battlements which line that lofty height. Besides this work Mr. O'Brien has managed to execute several others both in oil and water colours this year, which fact evinces a most indomitable energy, when it is remembered that he has also drawn some dozens of exquisite illustrations for this coming work, "Picturesque Canada," the first number of which serial may shortly be expected to be out.

Mr. T. M. Martin has passed a winter of steady hard work, using up the fine lot of subjects he accumulated in his extended expedition last fall among the lakes and rivers of Muskoka.

Mr. Homer Watson seems to have plucked up courage and taken heart from the approval his "Old Mill" met with last year, and the Royal patronage he obtained. His largest work is a very honest and truthful rendering of a subject which few of our artists would have chosen; it bears the impress of being a portrait of the scene, and will go far to convince the too sceptical mind of the average Canadian visitor to the exhibition, that it is possible for a Canadian pastoral landscape to possess beauty, and the power to move the soul. Of course we reserve our more extended remarks on individual works until we are noticing the pictures when on view upon the walls of the exhibition.

Mr. J. A. Fraser is putting the finishing touches to a very large and ambitious work, a scene among the fishermen in the background in the Perce Rock, a long barrier of old ocean standing like a gigantic breakwater just off the beach. The main subject of the picture is the crowd of fishermen and women. At the time we had the privelege of seeing this, so much remained to be done that it would not be fair either to the artist or our own judgment to pronounce any opinion on its merits.

Mr. Harris, the earnest and enthusiastic Vice-President of the Society, has also painted some fishing scenes, in which he displays great power of drawing the figure, and shows a most thorough love of his subject. This is the true spirit, and one which should always actuate painter or poet. Mr. Harris is both. Other artists may pay a flying visit to the shore of old Atlantic, but it is evident these pictures of Mr. Harris' are not the outcome of a tourists prying glance, but the work of one who has lived, suffered and enjoyed the varied phases of a coast life from childhood's spring, for thus only do we learn not only to love, but to see and feel the scene as one of home and home-life.

Mr. A. D. Patterson intends exhibiting some portraits of merit, and the subjects of which will be well known to the citizens of Toronto.

Mr. Perre, who announces his intention of visiting Europe this summer, has in his studio some lovely little bits of colour, both in oil and water colours.

The limits of this article will not permit us to mention the many others who will this spring put their best work before the public, did it do so, papers might easily be filled in describing the finish in preparation by the devoted few who have, now, for nine years struggled to support this annual display, in many cases sacrificing most tempting offers of a much greater pecuniary advantage for the sake of reserving their best strength to keep up, or rather to raise aloft Ontario's reputation as an art producing province, and to give the lie to those who say we know nothing in Canada beyond how to swing an axe, plough a field, or shovel snow.

The past week brought rather a severe loss upon Mr. J. C. Forbes the well known portrait painter in Ottawa, in the destruction by fire of two pictures which must have cost him much labour and considerable outlay of money to produce. One was his "Wreck of the Hibernia," a very large canvass which was not without merit, though portraits are Mr. Forbes' specialty.

The offer of Messrs. Rolph, Smith & Co., of Toronto, of prizes for Christmas cards designs was largely responded to, some two hundred having been sent in, of which the firm have selected some twenty-eight for reproduction, and the prizes are to be awarded to the three best of these by the committee of the Royal Canadian Academy at their Exhibition in Halifax in July.

The season's work in the Ontario School of Art so efficiently established by the Ontario Society of Artists, with some small assistance of the Ontario Government, is

now on view at the gallery of the Society on King Street, and is by far the best display yet made in Canada of the kind. The course of study so far as it has been practicable to conduct it with the scanty means at command, has been most thorough, and the drawings will surprise many of those who have seen similar exhibitions elsewhere. Much of the credit for the attractiveness of the exhibit is due to Mr. R. Harris, teacher of the day class (Antique), whose pupils certainly justify us, by their merit, in saying that they would do honor to South Kensington or any other Art School in any country.

Mr. Fraser's pupils, too, of the evening class have done some excellent work, especially when the circumstances of lighting and the tired condition of the students, (many of whom have done a hard day's work before coming to the school) is considered.

The exhibition of works in black and white just closed. in Montreal, is reported to have been quite successful, and it is intended to repeat it next year when the original work of Canadian Artists is expected to be the leading feature instead of engravimg and other styles of reproduction, of the works of other times and countries which was the case mainly in this one.

The Montreal Art Association opens its Annual Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture this month, and will contain many works of Canadian production. Let us hope the buyers of pictures in our sister city will not omit to encourage this, and by a liberal patronage insure an increased contribution next year.

BREVES AND SEMIBREVES.

A better idea of the strength of the body of performers who will take part in the Festival may be obtained by grouping them together, thus:—Grand Chorus, 1,200; Young Ladies' Chorus, 1,000; Boys Chorus, 250; Soloists, 12; or, in all, over 2,700 persons.

An idea may be formed of the proportions of the chorus and orchestra of the musical festival to take place in May next in New York city, from the following clipped from the *Musical Festival Bulletin*: "The grand orchestra will take an important share in the work of the Festival, and number about 255 instruments. The best available talent will be secured, and the distribution so far as can be outlined at present, will comprise 80 violins, 40 violas, 30 violoncellos, 20 double bass viols, 6 flutes, 4 oboes, 2 English horns, 4 clarionets, 8 bassoons, 12 horns, 16 trumpets, 16 trombones, 4 tubas, 10 tympani, 3 harps."

Mr. A. W. Livan, a most admirable, though young, organist of Boston, a pupil of George E. Whiting, has been giving organ recitals in Tremont Temple, which won for him high praises from the lovers of organ music in the Hub. For a time, two years ago, Mr. Livan acted as Mr. Whiting's substitute in the Music Hall Cincinnati.

At the twelfth Gewandhaus concert in Leipsic, two new overtures by Brahms were played from manuscript score. One of them is based upon the melodies of some of the German students' songs. A correspondent of the *London Standard* says:—

"The composer wrote it in the recognition of the degree conferred on him by Breslau University, where it was first performed, but in private, on the 4th of January. The orchestration of this second work is very remarkable, notably some extraordinary effects are produced by stopped horns and by the triangles. The ideas in both overtures are very clearly worked out. The reception they met with was favorable; though compared with that accorded to some of Brahm's earlier works, it can hardly be called enthusiastic."

Russian Journals tell an anecdote of *Mme. Hassano* in the character of *Ophelia* she made a great success lately at Moscow, and among the most enthusiastic was a man seated in the front row of chairs. After the mad scene, a voice was heard crying "Remember I cancel your debts!" In explanation of this speech it was learned that the music lover was *Mme. Hassano's* butcher, to whom she owed a large sum, and who, in his delight at her performance, could find no better way in which to express his admiration than that adopted.

MUSICAL GOSSIP.

A PERFORMANCE of Anton Rubenstein's sacred opera, *Das Verlorene Paradies*, is announced for June by the Musical Association, Innsbruck.—*Studio and Musical Review.*

THE Orchestra under the direction of Mr. Bayley meets weekly and is making favourable progress. In addition to a lighter selection they have in rehearsal Beethoven's first Symphony.

JOHANN STRAUSS' operetta, *The Bat*, which was recently given for the one hundred and fiftieth time in Vienna, has been presented on one hundred and seventy one German stages, besides those of Holland, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Russia, America and Italy. In Berlin it was given three hundred and sixty-two times.

MR. KERRISON has completed the first two movements (an Allegro Maestoso Andante and Scherzo) of a new Symphony Overture, to be called *Canada*, the last movement of which is founded upon national airs of England, Ireland, Scotland and Canada. Mr. Kerrison is arranging it for four pianos and organ, with a view to producing it in that form at the June Concert of the Toronto College of Music.

A FEW months ago it was announced that the committee of the Birmingham Musical Festival had arranged with M. Gounod for the production, at the next triennial celebration in 1882, of an original oratorio, *The Redemption.* In a letter just received from the composer, says the London *Times*, he states that the whole of the first is finished and scored for orchestra. The other two parts are well in hand, and will be ready by the first of January next, the time specified for the delivery of the work.—*Studio and Musical Review.*

WE learn from the *Memorial des Pyrenees* that Mr. James Gordon Bennett, now at Pau, has engaged for his personal gratification for the space of one month, the celebrated orchestral leader from Vienna, Johann Strauss, who will arrive at Pau about the 1st of March with an orchestra of eighty performers. This royal caprice will cost Mr. Bennett the bagatelle of 140,000 francs. But he is rich enough to pay for his whims. His generosity is also shown, inasmuch as M. Strauss will give a series of concerts which will be open to the public. This is the only reasonable way of making use of his millions.—*Studio and Musical Review.*

BUSINESS CORNER.

TORONTO, ONT., APRIL, 1881.

THE following reply to a correspondent signing himself "High School" has been submitted to us for an opinion. We have to admit, that we have not seen the effusion of "High School," but, if the substance of the matter lies, as it seems to do in the question whether anything can "assert its power by trembling," we should incline to the opinion that it can. "*Trembling* with rage" or with emotion are common enough expressions. Strong men will *tremble* with excitement if they have a highly nervous temperament; this trembling is rather an evidence of the power which shakes the frame than otherwise. And although the individual so trembling might be a frail child or woman, there could be no doubt of the power of the rage or the emotion. As used toward the piano it was the *power of the tone*, not the iron or wooden frame that was referred to. The expression is correct, and, although unnecessarily long, we think the reply is a complete answer.

To the Musical Editor of the Canadian Spectator.

SIR,—Your correspondent "High School," under one *nom-de-plume* or another, is always on the *qui vive* for an opportunity to pick at the Weber piano or its agents. In your issue of the 12th instant, criticising the article describing Carreno's performance at the opening of the Queen's Hall, he violates the rules of honest criticism by misquoting the text to suit his purpose. The article he misquotes should read as follows: "During the performance of the last piece (Liszt's Grand Fantasie on Faust) the magnificent instrument fairly trembled under the inspired fingers of the fair artiste. It is here, if anywhere, above and beyond all other musical instruments, the Weber pianoforte asserts its power."

"Now, Sir," says this obtuse schoolboy, "how can a piano *or anything else* assert its power by trembling?"

The poor dull ox cannot understand why the horse should tremble and quiver with nervous excitement when about to begin the race. The ox is strong. Is the horse weak, or is his only a different kind of strength? The ship that will not quiver in the gale must go down before it, and the tree that will not sway in the blast must fall. Why, the very pillars in Westminster Abbey vibrate under the swell of the grand organ. Burns, describing the Satanic dance in "Tam O'Shanter," where Satan himself was the performer and a bagpipes the instrument, says:

> "He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl
> Till roof and rafters a' did dirl" (tremble).

If the Devil could do so much with a bagpipes, what might not the fair Carreno do with a Weber Grand, which is admitted to have more tone in it than any musical instrument known to our age?

In Von Lenz's criticism on Liszt I find the following:—"The pianist in Liszt is a spectra, not fitted to dwell within the structural limits drawn by (*high*) schools and professors. Here the proverb is applicable: 'What becomes Jupiter does not become an ox,' or, as it stands in the original, not easily translated:

> Quod licet Jovi
> Non licet bovi.

Nothing could be more foolish than to wish to imitate Liszt, or merely to use him as standard in the judgment of others. When Liszt appears, pianists are silent, only a pianoforte remains, and that *trembles* all over." (So it does tremble after all.)

If your correspondent is of the Peel Street High School, I do not wonder at his incapacity to comprehend that *power* of tone which makes even the instrument producing it *tremble*—there is no Weber there. The instrument used at that school to give future musical critics a correct knowledge of tone and harmony, would tax the patience and skill of the celebrated performer at Kirk Alloway in the days of auld lang syne.

Yours truly, H.

MUSIC TRADE REVIEW.

Mason & Risch report Christmas and Spring trade as being very satisfactory. Since their commencement, some ten years ago, this firm seem to have done a steady and well managed business, and it is, perhaps, owing to their fair dealing with customers, both before and after purchase, that they enjoy their present well earned reputation. Some four years ago they commenced manufacturing on their own account, still retaining, however, the agency of the Decker Brothers piano, and the Mason & Hamlin and Burdett organs. The success which attended their other undertakings, seems also to have rewarded this new extension of their business, and in their large and handsome warerooms a Canadian pianoforte may now be seen, which may very fairly be compared with the finest pianos in America.

NEW MUSIC REVIEW.

"A Contrite Heart," composed by Ambrose, published by I. Suckling & Sons. A modest little song, very graceful melody, harmonized in a correct and musician like manner.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We solicit correspondence on all subjects of interest to the trade and profession of Music and Art, and shall always be happy to answer any enquiries our subscribers or readers may put to us in reference to such matters. In all cases, the full Name and Address of the sender must be given, not necessarily for publication but as a guarantee of good faith. We must not be held in anyway answerable for the opinions of correspondents; nor the return of rejected MSS. Correspondence for insertion should be sent in not later than the 25th of each month