

# The MUSICAL JOURNAL

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WE must apologise to our readers for the omission of the music pages in this number. The absence of some of our staff for their holidays, together with an extra press of work for those remaining, rendered it impossible to include them in this issue. We hope, however, to present our readers with a double number for Christmastide.

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FOLLOWING the example of other musical instrument manufactories throughout Ontario, Messrs. E. G. Thomas & Co., Woodstock Ont., have determined to have a band formed by their employees, which, under the leadership of Mr. Watters, promises to be a good one. They have just received their instruments, 16 pieces, and a handsome uniform.

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WE learn that Mr. John Spencer Curwen, President of the Tonic Sol-fa College, and son of the late John Curwen, whose name is so well known in connection with the Tonic Sol-fa system, is about to visit Canada and the States for the purpose of looking into the condition of musical affairs, and has signified his intention of visiting Toronto about the beginning of October.

WE understand that the promoters of the T. S. system are making preparations to accord him a hearty welcome, and in consideration of the great benefits which the system has conferred upon the English people we wish them every success.

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WHEN one hundred to one hundred and fifty school teachers meet together in midsummer—the thermometer registering 90° “in the shade,”—to study methods of teaching music, it is a gratifying sign of the times. The meetings have been enthusiastic, and judging from the manner in which the exercises have been performed, the teachers who have attended the “Summer School of Music” will return to their respective posts imbued with new ideas and fired with an energy unknown before in this much neglected department of education. We may reasonably hope for a “boom” in music in the public schools.

MR. HOLT is an able teacher, and in the course of his lectures propounded many sound theories, which he supported with marked ability. Still, like many others, he appears to claim considerably more than his own. Judging from his remarks, so far as we had opportunity of hearing him, he has adopted the Tonic Sol-fa theories, slightly modified, for solfeggi; Mr. Hullah's ladder, the French numbers, and the alphabetic symbols for the scale, Mr. Hullah's hand signs for the staff, the French time names and the primitive tape and weight metronome as a guide to tempo. For the above he certainly cannot claim originality, though his treatment of the diatonic scale as a “unit” certainly possesses that attribute, and we must leave it for our theorists to work it out on that line. We have no wish to criticize adversely a talented gentleman whose whole soul is in his work—who believes thoroughly what he teaches, and who fearlessly enunciates his views, but we must protest against the belittling of our own Motherland. Where else, on the face of creation, is music so well studied, fostered and remunerated? What a galaxy of sound musicians has the Church produced. Britain is the true home of oratorio. The madrigal, the glee the catch, the part song are all essentially English. Let us hear less of the ignorance of the Old Land, and honestly accredit her for the glorious progress she has made and is ever making in the art of music. Remember, too, that the ablest and most profound musicians, in this country, at least, are eminently British. We cordially extend a most fraternal greeting to our cousins across the line—we delight to talk, to sing, to play with them, to learn from them when they have some new thing to teach us, for the art universal knows no bounds—but let us respect its birthplace!

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AN interesting exposition of two systems of teaching was given at the Normal School on Monday the 8th inst. Mr. Cringan with the Tonic Sol-fa and Mr. Holt with the Staff Notation. It was a most enjoyable and interesting source of instruction. Intense enthusiasm was displayed on both sides; and the two rival methods, considering the time available, were very ably and earnestly exhibited. Messrs.

Cringan and Holt were questioned by the teachers present on many points, in every case giving satisfactory answers. The utmost good humor prevailed throughout; no vote was taken, and the large audience dispersed with, doubtless, many new ideas gained by the supporters of both methods, but each apparently firm in the faith in which he had been educated. One thing, however, was clearly demonstrated—both Mr. Holt and Mr. Cringan are men of no mean attainments.

#### WRONGING COMPOSERS.

A PRACTICAL turn has been given to the question involved in the custom among singing societies of producing cantatas with the accompaniments transferred from an orchestra to pianoforte, through a controversy between Mr. Dudley Buck and the Choral Society of Washington. The society had begun the study of Mr. Buck's *The Light of Asia*, when, learning that it was purposed to give the work with organ accompaniment, Mr. Buck wrote a respectful protest against the proposed misrepresentation, argued the essential character of its instrumental part, and urged a postponement until circumstances should admit of a proper performance, saying: "I do not exaggerate in the least when I say that I had rather that *The Light of Asia* should never be publicly given than that it should be given without an orchestra." The secretary replied setting forth the difficulties in the way of such a performance as Mr. Buck desired, but the composer remained virtuously obdurate; and gave expression to words which deserve to be read by everybody devoted to the advancement of American music, as follows: "At this time in our musical history the first public performance of a large American work is of more than merely local significance. I am now speaking, not of my work only, but of the American cause, of the hopes of the future, and for younger men. By not giving a work its adequate and proper rendering at the outset you hinder, not advance, the progress of American musical art. Had my work already been given in its completeness, had it been judged by a fairly adequate performance for what it is, not for what it is not, I should, in your case, simply confine myself to an expression of regret, partially consoled by the compliment the Washington Choral Society propose to give me. As it is, I owe it to myself to protest against such a first performance. I appreciate your courtesy in offering to make any public statement which I may desire. I am anxious to go on record in this matter, for, to my mind, it involves far more than the personal interest of the undersigned. I look at it from the standpoint of a principle affecting many American works yet to come, and believe for myself and my colleagues that our motto and our true interest is found in the American line: 'Learn to labour and to wait.'" Efforts were made to secure an orchestra, but they failed, and *The Light of Asia* was performed with pianoforte and organ accompaniment. — *Musical Record*.

#### GOUNOD'S ADVICE.

SOME few weeks ago, Mr. St. Saëns requested Mr. Charles Gounod to say how much time daily, in his opinion, young ladies should devote to piano practice.

Mr. Gounod's reply, subsequently cabled to a New York daily, was short and positive: "The less time the better, unless the young lady studies for the profession," briefly concluding, "*Voilà mon opinion, je vous la livre,*" which translated, means, "Here you have my opinion; I give it you freely."

The reader who receives impressions without caring to reason much may quite likely approve the great musician's verdict, and those who are not particularly musical, or are the victims of continued piano drumming in their immediate neighborhood at home, may likewise endorse expressions condemnatory of noisy practice.

It is true, music, when not wanted, is burdensome, and still more annoying when of poor quality. The thinker, the writer, the educated musician, or the tired and sick, all execrate and denounce noise, musical or otherwise, when quiet and rest are needed. In fact, instrumental and vocal practice is rarely agreeable to others, and it is to be hoped that the time is very near, in this ingenious age, when the sound of instruments can be sufficiently reduced by simple contrivance to prevent its travelling much beyond the room, yet have it retain enough good tone quality to preserve utility of practice. Reading over Gounod's letter a second time, and thinking it over carefully, the musician who has the progress of music at heart must come to the conclusion that it is an exceedingly superficial and thoughtless document. Concerning its intended effect, that of checking piano practice, I do not believe the young lady could be found willing to give up the pleasure of occupying herself with music, or lessen the time usually given to it, because a great musician has bidden her to do so.

Much better would it have been to pass word along the line of the grand army of teachers to urge and induce a more serious and careful study of the art, condemning all frivolous and superficial tampering with things holy. Such an opinion delivered by a Gounod to a Saint Saëns might have done much good! To recommend "as little practice as possible," is to encourage the superficial dallying and trifling, so degrading to the person and injurious to the art. The progress of music is, in a very large measure, if not wholly, dependent upon the manner in which the most complete and popular instrument, the piano, is studied. The piano plays an important part in almost every attempt to produce music (be it by amateur or professional) where an orchestra is not employed.

What would be the future of great musicians like Mr. Gounod, what the beneficial influences of their music, were the advice of the master just named carried into its last logical consequence?

To stop all amateurs from making good music (the "least possible practice" cannot produce it) would be to consign it to the professional student or graduated musician—equivalent to a speedy return to the middle ages, when the arts and the sciences were cultivated almost exclusively in monasteries.

Musical taste among the people would soon begin to decay, and the music of the masters, no longer accessible because too difficult, would gradually be forgotten. The audiences who used to enjoy opera and oratorio, concert and musical soirées, would constantly decrease, and in the end, poor Mr. Gounod, unknown and alone, would reap the full reward of his hasty letter.

The young lady (or gentleman) of to-day who loves music is a much more important personage than Mr. Gounod seems willing to admit. It is much better for all concerned, Mr. Gounod included, that she should be allowed to persevere her musical studies as devotedly as possible, rather than slight them and waste her time with "as little as possible"—that is, superficial—piano practice.

We know that there are many distinct classes of amateurs as to degree of ability, taste and genuine talent, those of the higher degrees comparing favorably with able professional musicians.

But even the least able of amateurs is deserving of consideration. The young lady who during the earlier stages of her musical experience, thought "The Maiden's Prayer" sublime, soon learned to aspire after something better. Thus love and taste for music, beginning with the lowest round of the ladder, rise higher and disseminate in each coming generation, until its love and fullest comprehension become universal.

Then will the time have come for the appreciation of good music!

Hence, it would be unwise to accept Mr. Gounod's advice to the young lady music lover of the period.—ROBERT GOLDBECK, in *The Etude*.

#### DO NORTH GERMANS SING IN TUNE?

DURING his stay in Berlin, Mr. Kingston became convinced that the Prussians, with all their love and all their just appreciation of fine music, have no ear for singing, being alike unable to sing in tune themselves and careless as to the singing in tune of others. Our own observations on this painful subject would lead us rather to say that the Prussians like to hear the right note, but do not trouble themselves about the quality of the tone. Roughness, combined with accuracy, is certainly tolerated by them both in vocal and instrumental performances; originally, perhaps, because they could get nothing better; then, after a time, because they had become used to it and did not mind. Mr. Kingston, however, is supported in his view that the North Germans, and indeed, the Germans generally, do not and cannot sing in tune, by no less an authority than Richard Wagner, who, apart from his character as composer, must, during a long experience as musical conductor, have had abundant opportunities of forming an opinion on the subject. After pointing out that "from a physiological point of view the Germans lack the true methodical voice gift," Wagner, in the true spirit of paradox, proceeds to argue that to this defect may be ascribed "the mighty influence that, for a century past, Germany has exercised upon the development of music; inasmuch as the creative force of a people exerts itself in the direction in which nature has been a niggard of her gifts to it, rather than in that

indicating lavish liberality on her part." A simpler and more natural explanation of the "mighty influence exercised by Germany upon the development of music" would be that, lacking voices, she has turned to instruments, and over the realm of instrumental music (as a glance at the programme of any high-class concert will show), Germany reigns unquestioned and supreme.—*Music and Manners*.

#### VIOLINS OLD AND NEW.

HOW THEY ARE AFFECTED BY THE HOT WEATHER.

THIS is just the kind of weather to write, talk and play the violin (in your mind). It is a little better weather for the old violins than for the new. The old fiddles are accustomed to this kind of weather, and can stand it, having become well seasoned, you know, for the last two or three hundred years, away down in sunny Italy, where the summers are generally warm and pleasant and enjoyable if there is no cholera about. And these same old "Cremona" fids just enjoy this hot wave; they are all aglow. Just take this one out of its silk-lined quarters, and see how it glistens and sparkles. The varnish, which is of various rich shades of amber, brown, golden, orange, cherry red and golden brown, looks for all the world as if it was just poured over the instrument melting hot, looking, and in fact, actually is, soft and sticky, although they have seen over 200 years of service; they must be very carefully handled in such weather. But the tones are all right. This hot, damp weather does not trouble the tone of the "Cremona." It is just as pure, as limpid, and as sweet as ever, and more so, if anything; the soft, rich coating of this rare old varnish is so thoroughly incorporated into the old wood that dampness affects it but little. It is only the strings that are seriously affected, and they will snap, especially the E, and occasionally a good G will fail, which is the most serious thing about the whole matter in this glorious climate, as sampled in the past few days hereabouts. The resin on the bow takes a peculiar hold or bite in such weather, and one can just immensely enjoy his Strad. or Amati in this warm, pleasant air—as well, or even better than cold, foggy or disagreeable seasons.

Everything considered, this is genuine "Cremona" weather. Take that old "Stainer" there which is getting to be pretty well advanced. Let's see! Mozart used to rasp away on it years and years ago, and it must have sounded pretty well then. On examination and referring to its history, we find it was whittled out away back in the year 1659, and even the ancient "Stainer" does not sound very badly in this weather, seeing it's covered over literally with some of Amati's best amber varnish. Then there is that newcomer, the new member of the family, which has just found its way across the water to join its companions. That, too, has got on its warm weather coat, and looks like one of those lovely rare ripe peaches—such color, and so waxy and rich—the weather suits it exactly. Then there is that fine old "Lupot" of the French school. Here is the masterpiece of the French Stradivarius, a perfect beauty, and one of the most perfect known, covered with that same soft, rich, lustrous varnish, scarcely inferior to that of Stradivarius himself. Even this

old "Lupot" is feeling pretty gay in this nice, melting atmosphere. In fact, these rare old fids are in a melting mood, and are as sweet and pliable as possible. Look out, my friend, how you handle them, or the soft, rich gum or varnish will show the finger marks, as this varnish is quite as soft and rich as Stradivarius himself, and the tone also works up like wax in this beautiful weather. Now here is a contrast. Look at this new violin; no matter who made it; it may be just finished, or a few months old, or, for that matter, a few years. This weather does not agree with it. No matter how good the strings are they will snap, and that is not the worst of it, the more you try to pet it the more beastly it behaves, and squeaks and acts as if in very great pain and distress. There is no danger of this kind of varnish sticking or rubbing off, or melting either, for it's as hard as glass, and with no more elasticity. The tone is dry and hard, and thin, and wiry, and there is no charm about it, no sympathetic quality, and even this choice, warm weather fails to affect it, except unfavorably, and to make it still worse. This is one of the incorrigible kind (and there are too many of this sort), and we give it up in disgust. But not all new violins are bad. Neither are all old fiddles good. Take a look at this new violin by Mr. Albert Krell, and see what we have here.

New, but fine varnish, fine wood—it is the real violin wood used by the old masters—"balsam fir," full of vigor and full of sound; how it rings and sings, soft, brilliant and pure as a silver bell. It's all there, full of elasticity and power, if it is a new one, and in years to come the tone will grow better and better. And we can easily imagine the "American Cremona" of the next century, with its coating of fine oil varnish over its beautiful top of balsam fir and back and ribs of fine sycamore. The vibration is free and pure and powerful even now, so that it is a great pleasure to play it. The tone comes out brilliant and powerful, yet sweet and pure, showing its metal and what we may expect in the future. The violins of Mr. Krell are certainly remarkable productions, when compared with those of other producers, and even when placed at the side of those that have come down to us from the old masters.—R. D. HAWLEY, in *American Art Journal*.

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE STRING QUARTET.

A MUSICAL FAIRY TALE,  
BY BEATRICE HARRADEN, B.A.

ONCE upon a time, in a dingy old garret, there lived many various and beautiful instruments. They were the property of an old Italian, who trudged all over Europe to collect the finest fiddles he could discover; and having stolen, begged or bought them, he returned in triumph to this garret, and left his treasures there and started off afresh. But we have nought to do with him, he was human and has passed away; but his treasures are immortal, for in each of them dwells a mighty soul, and we know that the soul can never die.

The fiddle-room was a strange place to behold; there were broken backs, and loose pegs, and bridges and necks, strewn all over the ground, and fiddles hanging from the ceiling and walls, and some heaped

up in corners, and a carpenter's bench where their master sometimes operated on them as he thought fit. But one special portion of the garret was free from this confusion and disorder—it was covered with a piece of carpet, and four favourite fiddles reposed there in their cases, in glorious luxury. They were looked upon as the royalty of the realm, and when they chose to step out from their retreat and show themselves, as royalty ought to do, their subjects were eloquent in admiration of them.

And they certainly were beautiful—the violoncello was a Stradivarius, the viola was an Amati, and the two violins were Stradivarius and Guarnerius. Thus they were all of aristocratic birth, and each one claimed to be greater than the other, and the quarrels they had on this point made them bitterly antagonistic; and, indeed, though the violin and the 'cello had been fashioned by the very same skillful hand, the dates marked inside proved beyond any doubt that the violin had been made in the prime of Stradivarius's life, but the 'cello before his art had reached its full perfection.

The violin never forgot this. He used to say, "You certainly are my relation, 'cello, but remember there is a wide difference between us; your varnish is poor compared with mine, your scroll is somewhat heavy, and the shape of your neck is clumsy. I am perfect; you are excellent but not perfect."

The 'cello, who was an easy going fellow, smiled and answered quietly, "You have often told me this before, Strad. fiddle, and I really quite believe you, if that is any comfort to you. You know I think most of tone and beauty of sound; now, you'll excuse me, but you often squeak."

The violin turned pale with indignation. "Fool!" he hissed out, "you can never make any sound except a grunt like a pig! How dare you insult me?"

"Ha, ha!" growled the 'cello merrily on the C string; "ha, ha!" he continued on the A string, and finished up somewhere in the 15th position. "What do you think of that? You have such a stupid little compass; thank Heaven I was born a 'cello!"

"Those two are quarrelling again," said the Guarnerius fiddle to the viola; "really that Strad. is intolerably conceited, I like to hear him snubbed by Mr. 'Cello. 'Cello is a good sort in spite of his grunts; you take after him in many respects, Amati, you have rather a nice tone, but I think you are a terrible confusion of form and sound; you are neither one thing nor the other, but a regular old go-between, and your varnish is not so good as furniture polish, and your figure is nothing better than a tub—no, you certainly have not much to boast about. Now look at me, and die from envy."

"I look at you, Guarnerius," sneered the viola, "but I see nothing. Your scroll which you push forward so proudly, seems to me like a clumsy corkscrew, and your sound-holes are not so elegant as hogs' nostrils; but I won't insult you as you do me, and I am sure, if we cannot find something pleasant to say to each other, it were best for us not to speak."

And then, sensible fellow that he was, he turned on his side and went to sleep.

And thus these fiddles would quarrel from day to day, each finding fault with the other's looks, when, after-all, the chief question was whether they could



produce richness and beauty of sound. But the time was near at hand when they would speak no more discords, but sing in lovely harmony.

And this was how it all came about. There had always been some difficulty about the practice, because, amongst so many instruments, it was of course awkward to come to any definite arrangement. But they spoke to their master, and one day he held a meeting, and told them that royalty was to be consulted before everyone else, and therefore the four favourites were to practice as long as they liked, all day and night if they chose. This was hard on the others, and they complained bitterly, but their master, who evidently believed in the divine right of kings, answered, "This is their home, their palace, you understand; I shall never send them away, but you may be sent at any minute, indeed, on the morrow I shall probably take some of you with me to France or Germany; and then I have not strung you up and rigged you into playing order; it would be an endless task to do this. Therefore you must keep quiet; and, indeed, you would do well to listen, so that when your turn comes to play, you may not be found wanting in skill."

And thus it was decided; consequently the Strad-fiddle led off the practice every morning after breakfast whilst the others cleared away the things and washed up the plates. But there generally occurred some unpleasantness; either Amati complained of the noise, or the Strad. laughed at the cello, or scoffed at the efforts of the Guarnerius fiddle, and one morning he was so insulting, that Guarnerius struck him on the scroll, and hurried from the room followed by Amati, who said he intended to look out for fresh lodgings.

The supercilious Strad. smiled wickedly and went on playing, while the cello reposed in his case and listened.

He felt sad and weary; he was tired of this hum-drum life; he was pining for liberty and action—he longed to be in the old cathedral again, accompanying the voices as he used to do in the happy past. Then life had been worth something to him, for each day brought its joy and brightness, its sweet work of devotion and praise. But now surely death had come upon him, for it was death indeed to be a useless log of wood. It comforted him to hear the sweet strains of the violin: they brought the tears into his eyes, and his heart was eased of its sorrow, and he opened his case and stretched himself and sat down in an arm-chair.

"I rather like your tone this morning, you are not squeaking, please go on; it gives me great pleasure to hear you when you utter such beautiful sounds—and the melody is a favorite one of mine: sometime ago I knew a fiddle who played the very same, but I must confess he did not play it so well as you do."

The fiddle smiled approvingly and bowed. "Yes," he answered, "there is no doubt that I am clever: you have every reason to admire what I am and what I do."

"It is beautiful, this music you make, but it is not perfect; nay, brother, don't pout, I have no wish to quarrel, but I tell you that you want to be supported by some of my bass notes, they would produce a most sympathetic effect."

"Nonsense," sneered the fiddle, "whatever I do is

perfect. But then he added more gently, "However, to oblige you, cello, I don't mind letting you try, only please no grunting."

"Oh, pray make no favour of it. I spoke merely from an artistic point of view. I was not thinking of what you or I could do separately, but merely wondering whether our combined skill could not contrive something great and grand, and thus the idea arose in my mind that a few of my notes would set off your playing, forming as it were a framework for you to fill in as you chose."

"Well," said the fiddle, "we will try. I did not mean to be unkind; I know I am hasty—come, are you ready?"

So they began with an adagio, some plaintive melody of the old Italian school, and the violin took the theme, and the cello played a soft, sad accompaniment, and lent a fresh charm to the music.

"Now for some fun," said Strad. "You do very well there, but I doubt whether you could keep up with me if I commenced to run, you dear, heavy old cello; monsters cannot run!"

"Try me," laughed the monster. "I'm not so elephantine as you think!"

And off ran the fiddle into a merry, merry allegro, and still the brave old cello followed closely and would not be left one single bar behind, but panted on to the end, and they finished up together with a grand chord, and almost breathless with excitement fell back in their chairs and laughed gleefully.

"Splendid!" said the viola, who had just come in, "what made you think of playing together? the effect is simply beautiful; but still I am sure you might improve the music, for you require some intermediate sound between the high strains of the fiddle and the deep tones of the cello. I can supply this, for, you know, I am a go-between; may I join you and see what I can do?"

"Do you agree, cello?" asked Strad., who was now in an excellent temper, being delighted with his own achievements,

"Oh, yes, the poor thing may try if he likes."

The "poor thing" darted an angry look at the cello, and inwardly resolved to rob him of some of his best passages, and he has kept his vow, as you know.

And thus the three began, and the sounds they brought forth mingled in rich harmony. The violin gave out the theme and passed it on to the viola, and he reluctantly tossed it to the cello, and the cello put it into another form, and thus varied, bejewelled and freshly clad, but ever beautiful, it travelled from one to the other, until weary-worn it sank into silence, dying away in the very soul of the violin whence it had arisen.

The silence was broken by soft murmurs of admiration from all the listeners, and the three players, aroused from their dreams of beauty, looked up and saw Guarnerius standing near them.

"You have made lovely music," he whispered, "it has moved me more than I can say; for, if you are able to do such wonders, why should you not play aloud to all the world—why should you ever remain silent? Nay, do not cease on my account. I will sit quietly by the fire and have a warm and put some fresh strings on. It has been rather damp and I feel a chill."

But he thought to himself: "I should dearly love

to play with them, only I dare not suggest it; Stradivarius would never consent, and, indeed, I don't think I could put-up with his haughty airs."

Just then the Strad. fell back rather wearily in his chair. "Guarnerius," he said faintly, "if you would come and help I should be much obliged for your kindness; I have most of the hard work to do, and it is too much for me. Suppose, now, you were to take half and play second for me, I am sure it would be a good thing for us both. What say you, comrades? After all I am the principal person concerned, because he will not interfere with your parts, and it is very possible that if he joins us he will be able to make our music perfect. It was 'cello who first taught me to aim at glorifying our sweet art, and not ourselves personally. I remind him of his teaching, and ask him to second me in this request."

"Heartily!" cried the violoncello; "come, Guarnerius, bring up your chair and join us, we are delighted to welcome you."

"Thank you, my friends," answered Guarnerius, "and I am delighted to come; and I'll prove a trusty comrade to you; Strad. and I will play all the notes you don't care about, and you shall never have reason to complain of my neglect or indifference."

"And in return for your kindness, second fiddle, I will occasionally give you a chance, so that you, too, may show people what you can do; and indeed there is no reason why we should not sometimes change places, and thus both have the opportunity of distinguishing ourselves."

"This is as it should be," sang out the 'cello, who had been swearing eternal friendship with the viola, "harmony of souls as well as harmony of sounds; if I have ever been cross or snappish, this day I claim forgiveness from you all."

"And I," cried the others in the same key.

And then they commenced the first quartet in the dim twilight—a time fit for beautiful thoughts imagined and interpreted by noble music. The violoncello gave out the melody, and the first violin received it lovingly, and caressed it and detained it as long as he dared, and then they all had their turn; and the second violin answered the first, and the viola answered the 'cello, now gently, now impatiently, now gruffly, now passionately, and they quarrelled and laughed, and wept and sighed, and there never was heard such music before, because there was perfect sympathy and oneness of aim amongst them all, and they breathed out their very souls into the music, thus making it immortal.

And when they were weary and rested from their work the violoncello rose and spoke to them: "We have done well to-night to combine our efforts; but now we shall find we are necessary to each other, so we must not part. Side by side let us go forth into the world beyond this little home of ours and play to all mankind; and teach them the most beautiful form of our art. Let us spread this religion, for with such a mighty power within us it were a sin indeed to linger here in idle luxury. Now is the time to win our freedom, even now, while our master is yet away; the morrow may be too late—he may come and claim us for his own for ever. Therefore let us fly even now, while the world lies open and our paths shine glisteningly before us. Come, brothers, let us not delay, nor take thought for the comforts of life; we

shall find our work to do, and it will be all in all to us."

"Yes, we will come," they cried, "we long already to begin our sweet labor."

"Ah, do not leave us," sobbed their humble companions, "you have revealed a world of wondrous beauty to us; it is but a passing vision we have had; oh, stay, and show us more."

"Nay, friends," the Stradivarius said gently, "do not desire to keep us here; we go to bring pleasure and joy into other lives in the great world beyond; and listen now—when our master returns and finds our places vacant, tell him not to grieve, for we are not dead; nor must he search for us, he will not recognise us even if he finds us, for a change has come over us and the Spirit of True Music has transformed our forms and ennobled our souls."

"Farewell, farewell once more!" they all four murmured, "we go even now; follow us when you can—into the wide world—farewell!"

They cast one fond glance at the dear, familiar home, and tears came into their eyes and trickled down their scrolls; and thus they passed away and were seen there no more.

But in the world of music there arose a new power, wielded by four royal fiddles, and they set up their authority in many lands, and spread their teaching far and wide, and it found a resting-place in countless hearts; and still the years go on, and even more loved and honoured becomes the music which they fashioned in their inmost souls; and still they live and labor on, fondly to declare unto all mankind what is the purest and noblest form of their art—a perfect string quartet.—*Musical Society.*

#### A POLYGLOT MUSICAL SERVICE.

THE thin end of the wedge which was inserted when the Rev. Arthur Ritchie first introduced the practice of singing the "Kyrie Eleison" in Greek at the Church of the Ascension, Chicago, has been driven in further. The "Kyrie" was in Greek, part of the "Sanctus" in Latin, one of the members of the quartet sang Latin in the "Benedictus," the whole of the "Agnus Dei" was in Latin, and the rest of the celebration in English, making a polyglot service, the like of which was probably never before heard in Chicago. The choir boys and men who sang the processional and recessional hymns and the service, except singing an original "Amen" anthem, had been tabooed in this church for many years past, but in place of an anthem the quartet sang Millard's "Veni Creator" in Latin, and "O Salutaris Hostia," by the same author, was also sung in Latin. Five Latin numbers and one Greek, out of a possible eight, in a church whose title is Protestant Episcopal, is considered an innovation. Several of the influential members of the congregation were highly displeased, and went out before the conclusion of the service.—*American Art Journal.*

CON EXPRESSIONE.—He drew his breath with a gasping sob, with a quavering he sang; but his voice leaked out and could not drown the accompanist's clamorous bang. He lost his pitch on the middle A, he faltered on lower D, and foundered at length, like a battered wreck adrift, on the wild high C.

## The Musical Journal.

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AGENTS wanted in every town. Liberal commission allowed.

### BAND CONCERTS IN THE PARKS.

THE citizens of Toronto have no reason to regret having subsidized the Citizens' Band. The public performances of the Band have been good both in the choice and execution of the numbers presented, and the band master, Mr Bayley, may be congratulated on the appearance and general efficiency of his men.

The series of performances by the Royal Grenadiers' Band have been no less successful, the creation of the Citizens' Band having doubtless aroused a spirit of emulation which has already raised the standard of their music, and shows a marked improvement in execution. The popular proprietor of *The Telegram*, Mr. John Ross Robertson, generously provides for this series at his own expense. That the public appreciates the concerts is attested by the thousands that throng to them; poor and rich can all enjoy the fresh air, mingled with sweet music, for the mere exertion of a short walk. From a moral point of view the open air concert movement cannot be overated. Provide sober, elevating entertainment for the people, and it will soon counteract base attractions. Since the midsummer open air free concert has been inaugurated we trust it may be firmly established as a permanent institution. And while speaking on this subject, we would ask in a spirit of all charity, that some of our other bands (?) take compassion on a very patient and a long suffering public. We beseech them either to strive after something better, or to remain in their band rooms until they attain, at least, some degree of proficiency. This summer our evenings have been made simply hideous with the blatant discord that 'twere desecration to call "music."

### THE KIST O' WHISTLES.

WHEN will our Presbyterian friends fall into line on the question of instrumental music in church. The following is from the *American*

*Musician*:—"It does not seem possible that such a thing could happen in the year 1887, and yet it is a fact that in the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church, held at Philadelphia, there were thirty ministers and twenty-four elders who voted to prohibit the use of instrumental music in the worship of God. Fortunately for the credit of the church, there were sixty-one ministers and forty-six elders who outvoted these fifty-four unmusical fanatics."

In Canada, the same hostility to its use exists. Now if they are not satisfied with Scriptural sanction, to whom shall they appeal? David sang accompanied by trumpets and shaums, timbrels, harps and instruments of ten strings, whatever they may have been. An appeal to individual judgment will not settle the question. Speak to the opponents of the organ, assure them of the grandeur and sublimity of the king of instruments, of its intensely religious character, its aid to devotion, its softening, hallowing influence on the surroundings of the sanctuary, and its antiquity as an adjunct to public worship. It will be answered by the little peevish light within, which burns in never-ceasing self-complacency, and gives itself forth in the unanswerable words, "*I do not like it.*"

The rising generation will not be satisfied with the hum-drum services of the past. The culture and estheticism of this age demands a higher, more dignified service, and if the Presbyterians do not recognize the fact, and provide them, they must not be surprised if the younger members of their congregations do not wander off into pastures new, where their higher tastes may be gratified. It is satisfactory to note the advance made in the direction of better music in the Presbyterian churches in Toronto, in which are to be found some of the best organs in the city, and representative musicians as organists.

### MUSIC IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

WE are inclined to believe that the Hon. the Minister of Education will hesitate before acting on the resolution of the teachers assembled at the recent Summer School of Music, namely:—"That there should be one system only of teaching Vocal Music in the Public Schools of Ontario." Whatever merits the Holt method of teaching the established notation may possess, we must not lose sight of these facts. The school comprised teachers from various parts of the Province of Ontario thoroughly trained in all branches of education except that of music; some knew nothing, others knew a little and could sing, while others had learned sufficient to enable them to discuss and express opinions on the subject. Now to an intelligent

class of educators the idea of a uniform system of tuition would necessarily be fascinating, especially if they remembered the haphazard way in which they probably studied and tried to teach music themselves. For many days successively they had listened to the exposition of a method which appealed to their sense as *teachers* especially. The aspect of the subject was presented from a pedagogical standpoint, illustrated by exercises easily performed by those who were fully capable of understanding them. Now, while hard and fast rules may apply to the usual departments of education, will they apply to the art and science of music? We think not. Let our teachers go to their duties and see how far they can carry out the method they have been studying. The school teachers of Ontario have shown themselves to be clever and thoroughly practical in other departments of education; let them work this out for themselves. At the next session of the Summer School let them compare notes. They may find it necessary, probably, to modify, change and improve the very method which they now recommend the Minister to declare the only one to be used in Ontario. It is not our wish to retard the movement in the slightest degree. The enthusiasm manifested by the teachers in the subject is an assurance that a new era in the study of the divine art in the public schools, is commencing in this country, and we wish to help it onward. But do not adopt any method until it has been thoroughly tested. It may be found necessary to elaborate a method especially for the Canadian schools. In the meantime let the teachers industriously and patiently work on the lines especially adapted to their pupils. After a year's practical application of the method they can approach the Minister with some degree of confidence.

#### WHAT CONSTITUTES A MUSICIAN.

A CORRESPONDENT asks our esteemed contemporary, the *Scientific American*, the following puzzling questions:

"When can a person be called a musician? Has a person got to know how to read music at sight before he can be called a musician, or is there such a thing as a natural musician? I had an argument with a lady here, and she claims that you cannot call a person a musician unless he can read music at sight, no matter how well he can play on different instruments. I claim that if people are good players on different instruments they are musicians. Which is right?"

The *Scientific American* thereupon gives the following answer:

"A musician, according to Webster, is 'one that sings or performs on instruments of music according to the rules of the art.' One may be a good musician

without being a scientific musician, and we would call anyone who could produce good music a musician."

In our opinion the definition of the word musician as usually understood would have to be "one who follows music as a profession." The Webster definition seems to us utterly false, for if it were true, a man like Richard Wagner could not be called a musician, for he could neither "sing" nor "perform on instruments according to the rules of art," and yet he was one of the greatest, if not the greatest, musician that ever lived.

The question of sight reading is a secondary one, as it only comprises part of the work of a musician. It is, furthermore, greatly a matter of talent and of practice. While no professional musician is perfect without this ability, he could not, on the other hand, be rightly deprived of his title, if, through shortsightedness, or for any other reason, he should be found deficient in this branch of the art.

Again, we do not sanction the use of the term "natural musician," as there is no such person. What the questioner means by it is a person with inborn, consequently natural, talent for music, and these are the only persons who ought to give themselves up to the study of music, for with good teaching, diligence, and some technical ability, the person who has inborn musical talent will ultimately attain the position of what ought to be understood under the word "musician."—*Musical Courier*.

#### CATECHISM.

THE following questions and answers are characteristic of a class of teachers of music found throughout the country; one need not go out into the wild west to find them:

Question.—Why should a child study music?

Answer.—To support the teacher.

Q.—What sort of a teacher deserves best to be recommended?

A.—The one that charges least, talks loudest and abuses his fellow-teachers most.

Q.—What is the music teachers first duty?

A.—To teach the child how to play a tune.

Q.—How do teachers manage to get along so well with parents?

A.—They promise everything, pretend to know everything, while in reality they can do nothing well.

Q.—What instruction book should the pupil use?

A.—Why the one she has, of course. That saves her the expense of buying a new one.

Q.—What is the use of an instruction book?

A.—To show the teacher how to teach.

Q.—How is the child to use its hands?

A.—Let her wave them gracefully; that pleases the people.

Q.—Which piano is the best?

A.—The one that pays me the largest percentage for my recommendation.

Q.—What sort of questions should the teacher ask the pupil?

A.—Only such questions that can be answered by "yes" and "no."

Q.—What is the chief aim of a musical education?

A.—To flatter the parents and to give the Miss a position in fashionable society.



Q.—What is the teacher to do if the child dislikes scales and exercises?

A.—Why he should not bother the child with them.

Q.—Should the teacher read musical journals?

A.—No! Never! They are restless sort of things. Good for nothing! They never let a teacher alone and are always up to new fangled notions.

Q.—Should pupils read musical journals?

A.—Gracious no! They are sure to want to play the music in them, and that prevents me from selling them anything.

Q.—Should pupils study classical music?

A.—By no means! That makes them appear stupid before others.

Q.—Which system of vocalization do you use?

A.—My own! The rest are all humbugs.

Q.—Whose music do you like best, Bach's or Handel's?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How soon do you allow your pupils to play in public?

A.—In the second term, always. A teacher who can't accomplish this is a fraud.

Q.—Whose instruction book do you recommend?

A.—The one I always used. Its an old book to be sure, but then it is like my big arm chair. It is easy for me.

Q.—Do you advocate cultivating a child's voice, or do you try to please parents?

A.—Always stick to the old folks; they pay the bills. They ought to be pleased. Don't you think so?

Q.—Why do you teach?

A.—Because I can't do anything else.

Q.—Do you like your pupils?

A.—Yes, if they don't worry me, and if their bills are promptly paid.

Q.—You know Mr. A? Is he a good teacher?

A.—No, sir; all teachers in this town are frauds, present company of course excepted.

Q.—Have you ever composed any music?

A.—Yes, I have written some Sunday-school music.

Q.—Why don't you attempt something greater?

A.—That's so. Never thought of that. Guess I will write an oratorio, something like the *Messiah*.

Q.—Who was your teacher?

A.—Myself.

Q.—Well, how does it come that you claim such astonishing results?

A.—You see I used to study music by myself while I was on the farm until I devised a new system nobody ever thought of, not even Liszt or Fislazzi.

Q.—Have you ever published your system?

A.—No, sir; these publishers never pay for a good thing.

Q.—Do you play Beethoven?

A.—No, but I heard him play the last time he was in this country.

Q.—How do you manage to impress your pupils with your greatness?

A.—Why, I tell them that they are a set of ignoramuses. That makes me appear big. When I meet people that know something about music, I am always meek and modest.

Q.—Have you much to do?

A.—Have always more to do than I can attend to.

Q.—Do you encourage your pupils to hear good artists?

A.—I should say not. That puts new notions into their heads, and leaves me in the shade.

Q.—Who was the greatest pianist you ever heard?

A.—Blind Tom. He is a rousing player, I tell you. Might be indefinitely continued. *Musical World*.

#### TEACHERS' COMMISSIONS ON PIANOS.

IT has been said that all that is bad in our laws and customs comes to us from England. Whether the epithet can apply to the commission either offered by piano manufacturers or solicited by teachers, on instruments sold through the latter's influence, is certainly a debatable question, in which the *pro* and *contra* could easily be sustained by persons equally intelligent and honest. It seems natural enough that a teacher should have a preference for a certain make, and perfectly legitimate that, of two or three makes which he might consider of equal excellence, he should recommend the one to which he is attached by personal friendship. Moreover, the fact of his being consulted by purchasers, and often being given the full liberty to select an instrument for them, is proof that his opinion is worth something. That for that opinion of his, and moreover for the time passed by him in the warehouse in order to pick up among scores of instruments the one best adapted to the touch and means of such or such buyer, he should receive some sort of remuneration, seems again unobjectionably right.

But all pianos are not bought through teachers. Still, in anticipation of such a possibility, dealers are obliged virtually to add to their own benefit on a sale the probable benefit of some teacher, and to increase by so much the cost of a piano on their price list, so that the general public must pay for the custom, as we have to pay the school tax whether we have children or not.

For our part, we should prefer, for the sake of open dealing, that the teacher should receive his percentage directly from the purchaser as a just compensation for his services, as a physician receives his fee in a consultation, although neither prescribing nor operating, and that this percentage or charge, whatever it might be, should be considered as legitimate a revenue to him as the money paid for his lessons. The public at large would be the gainer, and the piano business cleared at once of opportunities for cupidity and corruption.

The following story, told by Frederic Crowest, shows the abuses and dangers of the custom:

"Some years ago in Paris, a celebrated composer—in circumstances not indigent—heard of the arrival of a millionaire prince. Forthwith he organized a little 'at home,' collected the leading singers of the day, invited the prince, and gave a very charming performance. He had carefully banished from the *salon* his very respectable Grand piano-forte and substituted the worst old machine he could find that would stand in tune.

The performance over, the prince came up to thank the *maestro* for the charming music he had heard; when, observing the antiquated form and condition of the instrument which had been used, the prince supposed there was some history associated with it.

Was it ever in the possession of Tubal Cain? the prince might have thought. Not at all. It was the best the poor *maestro* could afford.

The prince understood the hint. After a few minute's conversation he asked: "Whose instruments do you prefer of all the Paris makers?"

The *maestro* thought Messrs. X & Y were the most satisfactory makers.

The prince left, and next day called at Messrs. X & Y's warehouse, purchased the most expensive instrument then in stock, and ordered it to be sent to Signor—, with his compliments.

In the course of the afternoon the *maestro* himself appeared at the warehouse.

The *maestro*: "Prince—was here this morning."

Manufacturer: "He was, monsieur."

The *maestro*: "He bought a piano."

Manufacturer: "He did. Is it not a good one?"

The *maestro*: "Excellent. It was by my recommendation he bought it. I'll trouble you for the usual commission."—*American Art Journal*.

#### IS MUSIC ARISTOCRATIC?

CHOPIN'S frequently quoted remark to the effect that music is essentially an aristocratic art, which is now making its annual tour in the music papers, only serves to show how nonsense will pass for wisdom, if only it has some great name to back it. All arts are "aristocratic," if by that be meant that they are debased when made to minister to what is low or immoral. In this respect, music stands on a level with its sister arts, neither higher nor lower. In reality, music is the most democratic of all the fine arts, that which is most accessible to the masses, as well as that which they can best appreciate. An ordinary painting, not a daub, costs hundreds of dollars, and masterpieces are worth fortunes. How many have, or can have, as their own, even a statue of the masters? It is not so with music; a few dollars buy the works of the masters, a little time and study will make them part and parcel of one's being, so that they can be recalled and enjoyed, even in the stillness of the night, or the solitude of the desert, by the humble as well as by the proud, by the poor as well as by the wealthy. Music! why it is the only one of the arts that ever makes its home among the lowly; that takes even the street arab out of the filth, ignorance and degradation which he knows too well, to give his soul an occasional glimpse of the sunshine, an occasional breath of the pure air of song land. Music is not essentially aristocratic; it is universal, therefore essentially democratic, Chopin to the contrary, notwithstanding—*Kunkel's Musical Review*.

#### SALARIES OF SOME POPULAR MUSICIANS AND OPERA PERFORMERS.

IN contrast with the enormous salaries paid to grand opera singers in this country, a few figures regarding this feature of the Berlin opera houses furnish suggestive reading. To two theatres in his capital, the Emperor annually makes an allowance of \$110,000, though even with this subscription the opera accounts contrive to show a deficit. The salaries are numerous rather than heavy. The director

gets only \$2,500 a year; the leader of the orchestra, \$1,500. Niemann, their great tenor, who is now starring in New York, has to sing eight times a month for six months, gets \$185 a night. Niemann gets \$17,000 for three months in New York. Betz, the baritone, seems even better paid. He sings oftener, and gets \$10,000 a year, the year being eight months. The prima donna sings nine months—about 65 times during the season—and draws \$8,000, while her predecessor, Lilli Lehman, gets \$13,000 for singing three months in New York, besides leave of absence whenever she desires to sing in concert or oratorio. At the Opera Comique the four leading artists are paid at the rate of £320 per month. The Societaries of the Francaix, who have a whole share, make £2,400. Among the Music Hall favorites, Theresa drew £20 nightly from the Alkszar, and the great Paulus makes his £12 a night regularly from one end of the year to the other.

#### EARLY MUSICAL EDUCATION.

PARENTS and guardians seem to hold the idea that the ability of a teacher selected to direct the early musical education of children is a matter of little or no consequence, provided his terms are low. In such cases, it is considered by them that a competent instructor will at a later stage be amply sufficient to complete the work thus unsatisfactorily begun. It would be equally logical to call in a doctor's boy to attend them in a serious illness occurring during childhood, reserving the services of a skillful practitioner until they had arrived at maturity.

The mind of the young is particularly susceptible to first impressions, and, if properly directed at first, a foundation is laid that will remain. Bad teaching is far less harmful at a later period, just as disease is less likely to make serious inroads on a constitution fortified by early care. On the other hand, bad habits once acquired are difficult to eradicate; and the process involves, in most cases, recommencement on a new basis, work that is not only unsatisfactory to the skillful teacher, but irksome to the pupil and calculated to dishearten young people to an extent sufficient to impede after progress.

In some cases, also, permanent harm is done, notably by so-called vocal professors, who attempt to prematurely train a child's voice under the plea that the muscles of the voice organs are more flexible during infancy and the more easily yield to technical training. As a matter of fact they "yield" so thoroughly that they never recover their functions.

If an infant is encouraged to walk before the muscles are sufficiently developed, a more or less crippled condition of the limbs thus overtaxed is the inevitable result. The vocal muscles are far more delicate than those of the lower extremities, and no young girl should be allowed to commence a course of technical vocal training till she has reached the age of puberty. In the case of boys, excessive use of the vocal organs generally interferes with the formation of the new voice when he attains the age of manhood, and, if persisted in during the period of change or when "breaking," effectually destroys it.

Children should, if practicable, have the advantage of musical surroundings, be brought up in an "atmos-

phere of art"; and such early instruction as may be deemed sufficient should be of the highest class, if future results are considered of any value. The charlatan is ever on the alert, and is too frequently engaged in an unholy occupation, which may be described as the musical "massacre of the innocents."  
—*Musical Herald*.

## HOME AND FOREIGN NOTES.

### DOMINION.

#### TORONTO CONSERVATORY ITEMS.

Mrs. Edgar Jarvis, one of Toronto's most accomplished pianistes has been added to the faculty. This lady's name will make the 10th, in the piano department.

Miss Jessie Alexander, Bachelor of Eloquence, a graduate with the first honours of her class of the National School of Eloquence and Oratory, Philadelphia, has been secured for the department of Eloquence and Dramatic Action.

Mr. W. Elliott Haslam, is to give one or more special lectures on the voice, to the Conservatory students, during the coming season. Mr. Haslam is exceedingly clever in his special departments, and his lectures, besides being most practical in their value, will be especially attractive, as they are to be illustrated by models for the purpose, the property of Mr. Haslam.

Mr. S. H. Preston, who is to have charge of the department of Sight-Singing and Music in Public Schools, in the Conservatory, states that great interest was manifested in that institution by the teachers present for the summer session at the Normal School this month. The demand for calendars exceeded the supply.

The work of fitting up the Conservatory premises at the corner of Yonge-street and Wilton-avenue, is rapidly being pushed on for the opening, which will take place on 5th of September next. Plumbers, painters, carpenters, steam and gas-fitters, &c., are combining to make the different apartments attractive and as comfortable as possible.

We understand that the demand for the Conservatory's prospectus or "Calendar" has been so great that a second very large edition has been found necessary. Copies can be obtained on application at the Conservatory offices and leading music houses.

Sig. D'Auria, the eminent teacher of vocal music, secured especially for the Vocal Department, after a brief holiday in Muskoka, has come to Toronto, to take up his residence permanently.

The establishing of the T. C. M., has been noted at great length in several of the principal musical journals of the United States. The *Musical Courier* of N. Y., under date, the 3rd of August, presents in its front page a capital likeness of the musical director, Mr. Edward Fisher, and devotes two of its extensive columns to a biographical sketch of that gentleman, and in which it largely deals with the origin and plans of the Conservatory.

The *Chicago Indicator*, (Music and Drama) also gives an entire leading article column to the T. C. M., and is much struck with its strength, admirable organization and with the very low terms for tuition announced in the Calendar. Following is an extract: "The terms of instruction from teachers, known to be of high rank, are so wonderfully low as to irresistibly attract attention. But this no doubt, may satisfactorily be accounted for by the fact that the cost of living, in all its departments—food, clothing, rent, etc.—is nearly 50 per cent. less than in this country; consequently education (although well-known to be of the highest order) and its accessory expenses are, comparatively speaking, very cheap."

We are informed that the prospects of attendance are most encouraging and that a large number of applications, for admission, are coming in from all parts of Ontario. A satisfactory representation is also promised from Quebec and the Maritime Provinces as well as from some neighbouring cities on the American border.

### OTTAWA.

Nothing doing, musically speaking. We have had the Templeton Opera Company, but the performances were badly attended owing to the excessive heat.

Nearly all our musical people are away *Summering*. Mr. Dingley Brown at Old Orchard Beach, Mr. Boucher near Montreal, Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Duncan Scott "down the Ottawa," Mr. Buck in his native country, old England, Mr. Brewer and family at Portland. Dr. Davies and Mr. Ernest Whyte *only* remain to endure ninety-five in the shade.

Miss Annie Lampman leaves for London on the 12th inst., from thence she goes to Antwerp, and from there to Leipzig, where she intends remaining for an indefinite period. It is rumoured that Mr. Jenkins will resign the position of organist at Knox Church and take charge of the fine new organ about to be placed in the Dominion Methodist Church. If this proves true, the congregation are to be congratulated, as Mr. Jenkins is not only a scholarly performer, but a young man of truly artistic tastes and feelings, and as an organist and choir director aims at leading both choir and congregation in the direction of his own refined and elevated feelings.

Great regret is felt by all our music-loving people at the loss of so prominent a musician amongst us as Miss Lampman, and also Mr. Boucher, who has accepted a position as violin teacher in the Toronto Conservatory of Music. Neither of these vacant places in Ottawa can be easily filled.—C SHARP.

### ENGLISH.

LONDON, August, 1887.—Once more the London musical season has come to a close, and glancing back over the musical events of the last few months, it is scarcely possible to regard them with entire satisfaction.

At any rate we have had a veritable musical prodigy in our midst, in the small personality of little Josef Hofmann. To say nothing of the unique attractions of three Italian Opera Companies vying with each other at the same time; and although the honours have been principally divided between Drury Lane and Covent Garden houses, yet it cannot be said that Her Majesty's has not made the attempt to assert its claims.

The only complete novelty the united efforts of the three above mentioned Italian Opera Companies have produced has been Michael Glinky's, *La Vie pour le Tsar*, a work that has been kept alive in Russia, since its first production in 1839, at St. Petersburg, chiefly by the national interest it arouses in all Russians.

Although it is by no means wanting in interest to musicians, being of remarkable individuality, yet the libretto is so wanting in interest to any but a Russian audience, that its repetition in this country is an extremely doubtful event. Young Josef Hofmann, the child pianist and musical prodigy mentioned above has sent a thrill of wonder and delight through musical circles—"Child, you have begun like Mozart. Try to continue."

In thus writing of him the musical critic of the Paris *Figaro* echoes the thoughts of most of those who have heard this marvellous boy-pianist.

Born in Warsaw, on June 20th, 1877. He is now only 10 years old. At the age when most children are but beginning their musical studies, he stands before the world as one to whom it is hardly possible to give any lesson in the technique of the piano, or in musical expression. Not only is this wonderful child comparable to Mozart, in extraordinary executive ability, but like his immortal predecessor, he has very remarkable powers of invention. Not only has he composed over fifty pieces, but he improvises on given themes with surprising facility and grace, and despite the smallness of his hands he plays the most difficult music with an energy and variety of touch which is beyond belief. It is fervently to be hoped that this *instinctive* musician may go on developing with coming years. As a proof of this child's extraordinary memory, it is stated that he learned to speak German fluently in *five weeks*, and that he was able to play from memory Weber's *Concertstück* with absolute precision, after going through it only three times!

Mr. Hofmann, *père*, a professor in the Warsaw Conservatoire, is delighted with his son's reception here, and has

arranged for two more visits, next autumn and next spring, it would be impossible to give an account, however concise, of the endless number of concerts given lately; no less than forty-two were given in June, and twenty-five last month, the most notable of which were those given at St. James Hall, by Mr. Charles Hallé and Madame Norman Neruda, and at Princes' Hall, by Madame Frickenhans and Herr Ludwig.

Sir Arthur Sullivan has been installed grand organist of the Freemasons for the present year; his comic opera *Patience* has been performed with brilliant success in Vienna being received with unanimous favour. Arrangements are being made for the performance of Dr. Mackenzie's *Story of Sayid*, and Sir Arthur Sullivan's *Golden Legend*, during the ensuing winter at Geneva.

Dr. J. F. Bridge and Dr. Mackenzie, have both been commissioned to write new works for the Birmingham Festival next year.

Mr. Dan Godfrey, the eminent leader of the band of the Grenadier Guards has received the rank of *lieutenant*; this is the only honour bestowed on a musician in connection with the Jubilee; whilst no one will gudge him the honour, it would have been gratifying to see some of the representatives of England's rising school of native composers recognized.

The only musical event taking place here this month is the Welsh National Eisteddfod, which commenced on the 9th, at the Royal Albert Hall, the Prince of Wales residing.

There will be a dearth of musical news till October, and therefore very little material for a letter next month, but you shall have what there is.

## VARIETIES.

### THE AMATEUR QUARTET.

MR. Scroopegg is an enthusiastic fiddler, and, like many others of the large class of amateurs, he is "nothing if not classical." He affects the higher regions of solo-playing, and never appears at the local concerts in anything less pretentious than a concerto by Spohr, or the "Witches' Dance," by Paganini, both of which he "hangs, draws and quarters" until the composers would not know their own offspring. The quartet, however, is his battle-horse, and though he has never maltreated the concert-going public of Boville by forcing one of Beethoven's posthumous quartets down their long-suffering throats, he has his friends at his house once a week for quartet practice.

The *enrôl* of the amateur quartet is always either viola or 'cello, usually the latter. Baggs, the 'cellist of Scroopegg's party, is a man of the old school, though his 'cello (which he draws from a green baize bag as daintily as a mother handles her first baby) is most decidedly modern, and gives forth a harsh metallic tone which can only be described as appalling. When Baggs puts on the whole weight of his heavy bow to produce a *fortissimo*, the fiddlers can only be heard faintly, like the distant hum of a distracted blue-bottle.

"You're late, Baggs," says Scroopegg, looking at his watch as Baggs comes in seven minutes and three-quarters past the appointed hour for the assault on Beethoven. Whiner, the second, and Dolores, the tenor, are seated before their respective stands, bristling with offended dignity as Baggs sits down to tune up, only condescending to give him the smallest nod by way of recognition. Baggs smiles grimly as he resins his bow, as much as to say, "You can't get along without me!"

"Your C string is half a tone flat, Baggs," says the leader, when the awful process of tuning the strident 'cello is over.

"Suppose we begin," says Whiner, timidly, without daring to risk an opinion on the tuning. Whiner is a tailor, and Baggs is one of his best customers, so the C string might be any number of half tones flat before he would remark on the fact.

"We can't begin till that string is in tune," says Scroopegg, flourishing in the ninth position; "Beethoven would turn over in his grave."

Baggs grunts, turns the C peg around both ways, and leaves it, out of sheer spite, just where it was. He knows it is out of tune, but he is not to be taught at his time of

life, how to tune a 'cello, and especially by a young scraper like Scroopegg.

"That's better," says the latter, approvingly. "Now then, one, two, three—"

They are off, considerably off, for at the first pressure of the tenor's bow his G string gives a howl, consisting of a series of notes not down in the copy. His peg has slipped. Another delay of a couple of minutes, during which Scroopegg whistles "Grandfather's Clock" with the air of a true martyr.

"It's all right now," says Dolores, coloring to the temples with vexation.

At length a start is made, and such a start! Now, if ever, is the time for the man of Bonn to turn over in his grave. The Allegro is at last done, very much done; in fact, done brown on all sides.

"Now for the *Sherzo*," says Scroopegg, with a smile that is diabolically complacent. He always says "*sherzo*," and talks of the Doggy of Venice; but then he was never taught German, which of course is not his fault. The "*Sherzo*" goes on until a rapid scale of demi-semis brings him up short, and he finds at a convenient moment that his E string has sunk a bit. Whiner tries to play first fiddle while the mischief is repaired, but fails; Baggs is swinging along in fine style, and seems likely to be first at the winning post, when the tenor gives it up as a bad job, and the whole lot come to a dead stand, just as Haley, Sam and Andy in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" did, when they found a barn built right across the highway.

The Adagio (with a hard g in Scroopegg's classic style of pronunciation) is next assayed.

"This Adagio," he explains, "wants very tender handling," and they begin. But Whiner's false stopping is most painfully apparent in the long drawn chords, and Dolores, who is afflicted with a very sensitive ear, looks at poor Whiner as though he would annihilate him. Baggs plays on with a noble disregard for expression, all p's being f's, and all his f's being fiff's; and his last chord is like the trump of the Archangel.

The final movement is a poser. The semi-quavers in 2-4 time (Key A-flat) put poor Whiner quite out of the running, and he plays a few bars, with only a faint suspicion that he is on the spot. Scroopegg blazes away at a mighty pace, leaving half his notes out in his desire to keep strict time, while Baggs and Dolores grimly resolve to do or die, and not to be outrun by the conceited puppy Scroopegg. Crash—bang, go the final chords, and the quartet is over.

And no member of the party seemed to know that he had been doing a solemn murder!—*The Fiddler*.

### A MUSICAL CRITICISM.

A student of human nature who attended a popular concert was filled with joy and wonder by the display of learning made by two ladies sitting behind him. The student did not know a great deal about music, though he felt reasonably sure about telling the difference between a funeral march and a galop, and consequently he drank in with great avidity the free instruction which came from behind him. The conversation began when Mozart's *Magie Flute* overture was half played.

"How funny! Do you hear anything of the flute?"

"Not a thing."

"Well, if I had been writing an overture about a flute I would have made the instrument more prominent."

"So would I; but just look at the fur on that woman's cloak."

"Isn't it lovely?"

"Yes; I wonder how much it cost."

"What, the overture?"

"No, the fur."

"Oh, I mean the music."

"Oh, yes, of course. What are they playing now?"

"Here it is, 'Airs de ballet, Orfee et Eurydice.' It has a dance of the fairies in it. I shouldn't think the fairies would want to dance."

Then there was a lence for a little space. Soon the band played the allegretto from Beethoven's eighth symphony. When it was finished one lady said to the other:

"How sweet and simple."

"Yes, but that wasn't the symphony; a symphony is longer than that I know."

"Well, what was it?"



"Why, this thing here, see? Dance of the Furies."  
 "Oh yes, that's what it must have been."  
 Soon a young lady appeared and sang two of Schubert's songs.  
 "I don't think much of these songs, do you?"  
 "No; but they say he is a great song writer."  
 "I don't see it. Now they're going to play the overture to "*William Tell*."  
 "What is the instrument that is beginning it?"  
 "Good gracious, dear! don't you know? Why, that's a bass violin."  
 Silence reigned until the lovely English horn solo began.  
 "What kind of a thing is that playing now?"  
 "Well, I don't know exactly. It isn't a clarinet, is it?"  
 "No."  
 "It's a bassoon, I guess."  
 By and by the orchestra began Gounod's "*Funeral March of a Marionette*." It begins with a tutti passage, ending with a crash on the cymbals. The two ladies jumped.  
 "My goodness! That don't sound like a funeral march, does it?"  
 "That's what's on the programme."  
 "Well, the man must have died suddenly."—*New York Times*.

## PAST AND PRESENT.

## PAST.

SIGNOR MARTINI'S GRANDFATHER.—"I have the honour."  
 (Bows).  
 ZOE BROWN'S GRANDMOTHER.—"Signor, I have come to ask if you will instruct me in the art of playing the piano? I have so great a love of music, that I would fain endeavour to perform with some little skill."  
 S. M.'s G.—"You have already studied the science of harmony?"  
 Z. B.'s G.—"I can play from figured bass."  
 S. M.'s G.—"Whose works have you studied? Porpora, Turini, Clementi? Good. Play me a fragment." (*Z. B.'s G. plays a Toccato by Turini*).  
 S. M.'s G. (*evidently satisfied*).—"Yes; I will become your teacher. You detach too much; but method will remedy that. Go home, Signora; in one month's time return to me; during that month practise your scales diligently and with patience, I will then take you as my scholar."  
 Z. B.'s G. (*rapturously*).—"Signor, accept my grateful thanks. I—"  
 S. M.'s G.—"I do. Pray pass on, young lady, here comes a pupil."  
 (*Exit Z. B.'s G. in a fever of delight*).

## PRESENT.

ZOE BROWN.—"You give finishing lessons on the piano-forte, don't you, Signor?"  
 SIGNOR MARTINI.—"That is my vocation."  
 Z. B.—"Fact is this, the professor who has been instructing me is a muff, no go in him; gives you buney-buney pieces. Now I want to rattle off some tip-top things. Sarah Green, a girl I know, has been to Leipzig, and hasn't she returned with some execution! Bless you, what fireworks she can produce! Now, Sarah is a poor thing at best, hasn't nearly such a grip as I have, and I mean to pass her —to put her in the shade, don't you see? That's what I've looked you up for."  
 S. M.—"I see that you have brought Mendelssohn's "*Rondo Capriccioso*" with you. Will you kindly play it? Pardon, but before you commence, what key is it in?"  
 Z. B.—"Why, don't you know?"  
 S. M.—"Will you answer my question, please?"  
 Z. B.—"Key, key? but I was never taught that way."  
 S. M.—"Do you play scales?"  
 Z. B.—"Learnt 'em all years and years ago, when I was quite a little thing. But let me do this *Andante*." (*Z. B. hops through Andante, and skirmishes over Rondo Capriccioso*).  
 S. M.—"Ahem! that will do. Do you play any exercises young lady?"  
 Z. B.—"No, I hate 'em. Nasty mongrel sort of tunes. But I say (*rising in some confusion*), you're a finishing master, aren't you? When you talk of scales and exercises, I fear I have made some mistake."  
 S. M.—"You made no mistake, Madame, it is I who have made a mistake."  
 Z. B.—"You, how so?"

S. M.—"When I saw you with Mendelssohn's "*Rondo Capriccioso*," in your hand, I mistook you for a pianist who wished to become my pupil. Allow me to wish you a very good morning."—*Musical Society*.  
 "The Future," will appear in our next number.

A Philadelphia organist has been discharged for playing, though very slowly and solemnly, a march from an opera bouffe. Seventeen deacons recognized it at once.—*Ex.*

"Do you call this a band of picked musicians?" said a hotel manager to the leader of a summer band.  
 "Ach! dot vos so, I bick 'en mineselluf," replied the band master.

"Well, then, you picked them before they were ripe."

"Young man," said a minister, "are you fighting in the army of the Lord?"

"Not now, but I did last winter."

"Why are you not fighting for the Lord now?"

"I can't. The choir is busted."

"Yes," said Mrs. Rusticus, "Maria has begun a course in vocal technikew. Her teacher has already made her move the diagram and sing from the borax. I believe she uses the aluminable method of breathing."

A BASE ball club and an operatic troupe got badly mixed up on a railway train the other day. "Are you the first base?" excitedly exclaimed the manager of the match, buttonholing a slim young man. "First base? Do I look like it? No sir! I am *primo tenore assoluto*."

A YOUNG lady sang with great success at a concert, Molloy's song "*The Laddies in Red*" but was rather surprised to read in a weekly local paper that "Miss — gave a very fine rendering of the patriotic song, '*The Ladies in Bed*.'"

SHE was buying a piece of music and the clerk asked her if the fact of its being in flats would be any obstacle to her buying it. "Certainly not," she replied, "it makes no difference how many flats are marked, for I always scratch out all beyond two with my penknife."

TOO CLASSICAL.—"I see, Lucinda, that they are going to have a new musical pagoda at Nantucket Beach next season. We must go down." "I don't think I care to, Henry; I can't bear pagodas. If they were going to play waltzes, I wouldn't mind. Pagodas are so classical."

A NEW PRODIGY.—"What do you think? A new prodigy has been discovered in Berlin!"

"Is that a fact! What in goodness name can it be?"

"Just think of it! A fourteen year old girl has been found who cannot yet play on the piano."—*Neue Music Zeitung*.

UP in the choir the tenor was making love to the soprano in muffled voice while the preacher was waxing eloquent in the pulpit below. "You're a dear," the young man whispered. "A doe rather," the soprano smiled back. "Oh yes," replied the tenor. "You're the do fa mi." She killed him with a look.

A MUSICAL BURGLAR.—"Did you hear about the burglar who was arrested this morning?"

"No! what for?"

"For breaking into song."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. He'd got through two bars, when some one hit him with a stove."

Funeral private.—*The Rambler*.

A YOUNG lady of my acquaintance was once present at a musical party, where the lion of the evening was a celebrated flute player. After he had performed, this young lady was presented to him, and there was a general silence in the room, which added to her natural embarrassment. She felt that she must say something pleasant, so, with a happy smile, she exclaimed: "Oh, how delightfully you play! Do you ever accompany yourself on the piano?" The artist looked at his flute, then at his fingers, shrugged his shoulders, bowed low and said, "Never!" After a moment she saw why everybody laughed.

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