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JANUARY, 1903.

ORGANS AND CHOIRS IN TORONTO. (continued.)

The choir of the Sherbourne St. Methodist Church is an interesting one; In the first place it numbers sixty. members. Of this large number only the four solo voices are paid, the others being selected from the large membership of the church. Then again, it is a vested OPENING VOLUNTARY choir: that is, the organist and all the singers wear black cassocks; while this mode of dress gives a uniformity to the appearance of the choir which is very desirable, it is, nevertheless, a somber and gloomy vesture, and in our humble opinion-would be greatly improved by the addition of the white cotta; however, it is an improvement upon the array of flowers and feathers of every imaginable line that usually greets the eye of the church-goer. At the time of our visit, two of the soloists, and a large number of the chorus singers were absent, so the singing of the choir was by no means up to the usual average; to our mind, the most noticeable defects were a lack of firmness in attack and crispness of tone; these may have been due to the absence of leading voices, and possibly to infrequent or abbreviated choir rehearsals during the warm weather. The selections - both vocal and instrumental were very good, and the church makes a practice of distributing among the congregation each Sunday a leaflet containing notices of all services for the week and the OFFERTORY PRELUDE-Hymn transcription musical programs for the morning and evening services of the day. This affords the listeners an opportunity to learn the name of an anthem or voluntary, and also the name of its composer, and they are thus prepared to express a preference for any thing that pleases them and request its repetition. The following programs were CONCLUDING VOLUNTARY-March, "Queen of Sheba" given the day of our visit to the church.

Sunday, August 24th, 1902.

MORNING.

Adagio, in E major - - Merkel { "Mein Glaubiges Herz" Rach OPENING VOLUNTARY Andante in D major -- Smart

Grav Λ NTHEM---

There is a path within this vale of sorrow Where all is peace, and shadows flee away; There is a hope, one ever bright to-morrow, That leads us on to everlasting day. Earth has its flowers, we love them and we cherish, Bright are the pathways oft our feet have trod; But brighter still the flowers that never perish,

Strewing the path that leads us on to God. OFFERTORY PRELUDE-Lento e espressivo, Alfred Hollins

OFFERTORY Solo - "Peace Eternal" - - - - Gounod

"For clouds and tears and sorrow, All earthly strife shall cease, If we but look above us For eternal peace."

CONCLUDING VOLUNTARY-Movement Symphony VIII. Widor

EVENING.

(Prelude "Lohengrin" - Wagner Larghetto (violin & organ) Galtermann. Cantilene - - - - - Maily

ANTHEM-"Gloria in Excelsis" - - Sir John Stainer

"Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good-will toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy griat glory. O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

"O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ: O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father. that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us; Thou that takest away the sins of the world receive our prayer: Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

"For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord: Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen."

AFTER LESSON CHORUS- - - - - - - Irwin

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! That calls me from a world of care, And bids me at my Father's throne,

Make all my wants and wishes known."-WALFORD

Ashford OFFERTORY ANTHEM - - - - Dr. Roberts

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. -(St. John xiv. 27.) Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. – (xvi. 33.)

Gounod

A visit to St James Cathedral (Episcopal) proved very enjoyable. The organ is a beautiful instrument, and the organist (Dr. Ham) a well known musician of Toronto: in spite of the holiday season the choir was in good form: it consisted (on that particular Sunday) of twenty boys and about sixteen men; the canticles were chanted with great spirit, and faster than we had ever heard them - even in the Cathedrals of England. Strange to say, the Te Deum was sung to a chant, a proceeding which always proves tiresome with a hymn so long and varied in character; sounding - as it does -the lowest note of sorrow, and the highest note of joy, it seems to demand a treatment that cannot possibly be given it by a succession of chords comprised in an ordinary chant. But in this case, the chant had its advantages, for the congregation joined in it as heartily as they did in the hymns; in fact, the only numbers given over entirely to the choir were the anthem and offertory solo. In the singing of the Processional and Recessional the voices of the choir were most beautifully in tune, and no matter how subdued in power, the greatest precision of attack was observed.

On another Sunday we attended services at the Metropolitan (Methodist) and the Jarvis St. Baptist Churches. Both are noted for their fine organs and good choirs; but unfortunately, the regular organists were absent, and also the soloists, which is much like leaving a company of soldiers without a commissioned officer; one could hardly expect a fancy drill under such conditions.

The Metropolitan organ is a beautiful three manual instrument, and plans are now being made to spend ten thousand dollars in enlarging and improving it. The organist (Mr. Torrington) is one of the leading musicians of Torronto, and besides his choir work and teaching, he finds time to direct the largest Choral Club of the city. Prof. Voight is the organist of the Jarvis St. Baptist Church, and the sexton informed us "they had the best organist in the city." After receiving this information we were more than ever sorry to miss the pleasure of hearing him.

We did not attend service at St. Andrews (Presbyterian) but went to the church one morning with a friend, and heard the organ played. It is a powerful three-manual instrument containing stops of beautiful quality. The diapasons are especially rich and sonorous, and the architectural structure of the church brings out to advantage the dignity of this noble instrument.

The choir of St. Andrews consists of a solo quartet and large chorus of mixed voices; and their work is said to be very good. In concluding this rambling sketch, it would not be out of place to say that the deepest and most delightful impressions received during these church visits came through the prompt, hearty and *musical* singing of the congregations. They seemed to literally fulfil the command of the Psalmist, "Let the people praise Thee O God; Yea, let *all* the people praise Thee." E. L. A.

ORGANS AND ORGAN-PLAYING.

THE SWELL BOX.

The swell-box was invented toward the end of the last century. Handel had great admiration for this English invention, and the Abbé Vogler recommended it years afterward to the German makers. Nowadays our instruments have become, in the opinion of the uninitiated, as expressive as a whole orchestra

This is a great mistake. I repeat that the *expression* introduced into the modern organ can only be subjective; it is due to mechanism, and can never be spontaneous. While the orchestral instruments (both wind and string), the piano, and the voice can only shine by the spontaneity of the tone and the suddenness of the stroke, the organ, encompassed by its primitive majesty, speaks as a philosopher. It is the only instrument that can continuously expand the same volume of sound, and thus create the religious idea through the thought of infinity.

A good organist will only make use of his express ive means in an architectural way, that is, by treating them as lines and plans.

As *lines*, when he passes slowly from *piano* to *forte* on an imperceptible incline, by a constant progression without stops or jolts.

As *plans*, when seizing the opportunity afforded by a pause or rest, he suddenly closes his swell-box between a *forte* and a *piano*.

To try to reproduce the expressive accents of a treble string or a human voice is better suited to the accordion than to the organ.

THE CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC OF THE ORGAN.

The chief characteristic of the organ is its greatness, that is to say, its strength and will. Every illogical alteration in the intensity of sound, every shade that cannot be expressed or translated by a straight line, constitutes an outrage upon art, a crime of high treason. So all those who treat the organ as an accordion, who play arpeggios, slur their notes, or are rhythmically unsound, should be branded criminals, and held up to public scorn. On the organ, as in the orchestra, everything should be accurately realizable; the uniformity of feet and hands is absolutely necessary, whether you are beginning the note or finishing it. All sounds placed by the composer under the same perpendicular should begin and end together, obeying the baton of

the same leader. We still see here and there unfortunate organists who let their feet drag upon the pedals, and who forget them there long after the piece has been played.

I should like to know what an orchestral leader would say if, after his last beat, his third trombone dared to hold a note. From what savage land did this barbarous custom find its way amongst us? It was prevalent some years ago-in fact, it was really epidemic. They are indeed guilty, those organists who do not link closely together the four voices of polyphony, the tenor and soprano, the alto and the bass. Take Bach's gigantic work, and your will not find in it more than two or three passages, two or three measures, that exceed the limit of the hands extension. But admire the art of the sublime creator; a moment before or a moment after these passages pauses occur, which clearly afford the time to open and close the 16-feet pedal, so as to play with the help of the pedals tied notes that could not possibly be played on the manual alone. Save the two or three exceptions, which are fully justified by the music of the voices, the whole of Bach's work is admirably written, both in this and in every other sense.

ARTICULATION.

The hammer of the piano strikes a chord ten times per second, and our ear can easily recognize the ten separate strokes, the sound dying immediately; but on the organ we must allow for a silence equal in duration to the sound between each repetition, if we wish clearly to distinguish these repetitions in a quick movement, or even in a moderate one. This is the formula that I suggest : Every articulated note loses half of its value. If we are dealing with the long periods in slow movements we must, of course be guided by the spirit, and not by the letter of this law. Detached notes cannot be allowed on the organ. Each detached note becomes staccato, like that of bow instruments; that is to say, a series of equal sounds separated by equal silences. Detachment should be affected by holding the finger as near the keyboard as possible, the wrist being slightly contracted. When two chords contain the same note. it should be tied and not articulated.

RHYTHM.

What is rhythm? It is the constant manipulation of the will at each periodical recurrence of the strong beat. Rhythm alone will command a hearing; and, on the organ, every effect depends upon the rhythm. Much as you may lean the whole weight of your shoulders upon the keyboard, you will obtain nothign from it. But just postpone the attack of a chord for one-tenth of a second, prolong it ever so little, and you will soon see what an effect is produced. On a keyboard devoid of expression, and without touching any mechanism, and with all stops open, you obtain a $crescend_0$ by the mere increase of duration given progressively to chords or detached notes. Playing the organ really means playing with chronometrical quantities.

Woe be to you if your movement is not posseessed of absolute regularity, if your will does not manifest itself with energy at each respiration of the musical phrase, at each break, or if you unconsciously allow yourself to "urge." Would you like a lesson in rhythm? Listen to those huge engines pulling tons of goods, admire their formidable piston-beat, marking each repetition of the strong beat, slowly, but pitilessty; it is like the very stroke of fatality; it makes one shudder.

SIT STILL.

Avoid every useless movement, every displacement of the body, if you wish to remain master of yourself. A good organist sits upright on his bench, slightly leaning toward his keyboard, never resting his feet upon the trame of the pedals, but letting them lightly touch the notes, the heels being, so to speak, riveted together, and the knees likewise.

Nature has provided us with two very useful compasses; with both heels tight together, the maximum of separation between the points will give us the fifth; and with the two knews placed in the same position, this maximum should produce the octave. It is only by training in this way that we can ever hope to attain precision; the calves touching, the feet constantly coming together again. The foot should never strike the pedals perpendicularly, but with a torward movement, just touching the note as nearly as possible an inch or two from the black key.

THE FOUNDATION OF ORGAN-TONE.

Considering the state of perfection which the present builders have reached, we are almost dazzled by the amount of wealth they offer us, and tempted to wander from the straight road. We must not forget, however, that all music depends upon the quartette, whether it be on the organ, in an orchestra, or a choir. That is really the foundation of the language. Our quartette on the organ is composed of the limpid and noble sonorousness of the eight-feet pipes... The basso continuo of some organists who fall asleep, on their sixteen-feet pedals is fast becoming a nuisance. We would go mad if we had to listen to a symphony in which the double basses played without interruption from the first to the last note-Plain-song itself loses its eloquence with such an interpretation, and yet it seems better adapted than any other form of art to a uniform bass, considering the apparent monotony of its structure, narrowly confined within the limits of the octave. But this apparent monotony only exists in the opinion of those who have no eyes to see, and whose ears cannot hear. CHARLES M. WIDOR, in The Musician (London).

ANDANTE ESPRESSIVO.

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ALLEGRO MODERATO.

Gt. Diapasons Flute & Principal. Ped. Bourdon coupled to Gt.

















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(Gt. Full.

Sw. Full.

(Ta. Bourdon coup. to Sw.

MARCH MILITAIRE.









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JESUS WEPT.

Sw. Soft stops.

And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it.











Sw. Melodia Dulciana Fl.& Oboe. Ped. Bourdon.

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PRELUDE.































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E. L. ASHFORD.

A PRAYER.

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ANDANTE CANTABILE.

ADOLPH HUSS.













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ELEVATION.







Sw. Soft 8'& 4' Ped. Bourdon coup.to Sw. **MEDITATION**









PRELUDE.

Gt. Melodia.

Sw. Stopped Dia.and Fl. coup.to Gt.





Gt. Melodia, Stopped Dia.& Fl. Sw. Full without Reeds. Ped. Bourdon coup.to Sw.

SABBATH EVENING.

VARIATIONS ON SCHEFFLER'S TUNE TO "AT EVEN ERE THE SUN WAS SET"

ARTHUR BERRIDGE.



















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ARIA.







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