SOME MUSICAL PUBLICATIONS.

The serial issues of "Famous Composers and Their Works" (Boston, J. B. Millet Company, publishers) have now reached number eighteen. The five numbers that have appeared since the work was last mentioned in this journal contain, besides the usual amount of illustrative music, the following essays: "Richard Wagner," by W. J. Henderson; "Music in Germany," by John K. Paine and Leo R. Lewis; "Orlando di Lasso" and "The Netherland Masters," by W. J. Henderson; "Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina," by Louis C. Elson; "Claudio Monteverde" and "Alessandro Scarlatti," by W. S. B. Mathews; "Giovanni Battista Pergolese," by H. M. Ticknor; "Gioacchino Rossini" and "Arrigo Boito," by Arthur Pongin; "Vincenzo Bellini" and "Gaetano Donizetti," by H. M. Ticknor; "Gasparo Luigi Pacifico Spontini," by Adolphe Jullien; "Luigi Cherubini," by Philipp Spitta, and "Giovanni Sgambati," by Arthur Foote. A critical sketch of Verdi, which probably has Arthur Pongin for its author, is also begun. Many of these essays are notable contributions to musical literature. This is true especially of Pongin's study of Rossini, Jullien's essay on Spontini and Mr. Henderson's analysis and discussion of the creative system of Wagner. This last work, indeed, is most admirable in its lucidity and directness, and effectually demolishes the notion that the poet-composer's method was abstruse and incomprehensible. The French writers are vigorous champions of the men of whom they write, but the things which they praise are all worthy. It is gratifying to note that there is no depreciation of the standard fixed at the outset as this remarkable publication goes on toward completion.

What is called a new edition of "The History of Music," by John Frederick Rowbotham, is published by Charles Scribner's Sons. The title is puzzling, as the work begins with some fantastic speculations about the origin of music, and stops short with the art of the troubadours. Some years ago Mr. Rowbotham published a work in three volumes covering the same ground, but he was more explicit in his title. It was "A History of Music from the Earliest Times to the Middle Ages." This, with a qualification, should have been the title of the new edition. There would then have remained only the quarrel with Mr. Rowbotham concerning his use of the word "history." As the title stands it is wholly misleading, as instead of writing a history of music he barely reaches the beginning of the art. There are more things about the book than the title to deplore, however. Mr. Rowbotham affects a scientific manner. He has an idea that something is to be learned about "pre-historic music," by which term he means the music of savage and semi-civilized peoples, and he devotes seventy-nine pages to a discussion of it. Unfortunately, his whole discussion is a fanciful fabric reared on the sand. It has no foundations, and his line of argumentation is wrong, turning topsy-turvy the simplest laws of development. Some day what Mr. Rowbotham has aimed at will be accomplished, and will be a book of great scientific value, but it will not be until a body of evidence, which is now wholly wanting, shall have been gathered together. Half a dozen phrases which have done service in the histories for the last hundred years suffice Mr. Rowbotham, who, moreover, is so little deterred by a total absence of evidence that he even ventures on what he calls a "chronological history of Egyptian music, dynasty by dynasty, from the time of Menes to the time of the Ptolemies." Wherein does this "history" consist? In a mass of loose conclusions drawn from a few pictures which have survived the ancient times. However interesting Mr. Rowbotham may be, he is not a historian, but a reckless speculator in words.

"The Children's Souvenir Song Book" is the title of a collection of songs for children's voices made by William L. Tomlins, choral director of the Columbian Exposition, and published by Novello, Ewer & Co., New-York and London. The songs are forty-one in number, and seem all to have been composed expressly for the book. The leading composers of the United States and England are represented, among them G. W. Chadwick, Clayton Johns, J. Barnby, H. W. Parker, G. Templeton Strong, John K. Paine, George L. Osgood, Arthur Foote, Ethelbert Nevin, C. H. H. Parry, Mrs. H. H. A. Beach, A. R. Gaul, Berthold Tours, C. V. Stanford and A. C. Mackenzie. Much of the poetry is also original, and the little lyrics of Mrs. Elsie J. Cooley deserve a word of praise for their dainty sentiment and sweet and simple expression.

EMILE ZOLA.

HOW HE WORKS AND PLAYS.

Emile Zola, in a recent conversation with a correspondent of "The Pall Mall Gazette," gave many details concerning his literary methods. He had always been very methodical, he said, firmly believing in regular work.

"At my house in Medan, in my study, I have carved in letters of gold over my mantelpiece the words, 'Nulla dies sine linea,' and this rule I have stuck to all my life—I may say that I have conscientiously all these years. My faith is that hard work, that is to say, regular work, is the first essential for the production of a book. I am no impressionist, and I don't believe in work rapidly dashed off. The creation of a book takes much trouble and exacts actual pains. When I start a book I have never any idea as to its plot, only, at most, a general idea of the subject, and the first thing that I do is to prepare a sketch or outline of the story. This I do, pen in hand, because ideas only come to me when I am writing. I can't think while sitting idle. I write as though I were talking to myself, discussing the people, the scenes, the incidents. The ebauche, or sketch, is a kind of chatty letter addressed to myself, which often equals in length the novel which is to spring from it. I then draw out the plan of the book, the list of characters, and a most elaborate scenario. Then each character is studied in detail, the scenes that are to be described are visited and noted down, the incidents elaborately evolved. Thus for 'La Curee' I spent long days in studying the description of the carriages described, interviewing several leading carriage builders. For Saccard's hotel I spent hours outside the hotel of M. Menier in the Parc Monceau. The Conservatory of Renee was described from the conservatory in the Jardin des Plantes. For 'Le Ventre de Paris' I visited the Halles over and over again. Perhaps one of the books next to 'La Debacle' which exacted the most preliminary labor was 'La Faute de l'Abbe Mouret,' for which I had to read up and take notes from mountains of religious books, and for which I attended mass over and over again at the little church of Sainte-Marie in Batignolles. 'L'Assommoir' also gave a great deal of trouble, first in regard to the plot, and secondly in the way of writing it. Where the author expresses himself it is in the language of the people whose lives are described in the book. I studied numerous slang dictionaries; indeed, it was in Bellyan's dictionary that I found the word 'assommoir,' meaning a drink-shop. It was the 'Assommoir' that first brought me real success. I had sold the right of publishing it in serial form to a democratic newspaper called 'Le Bien Public' for 10,000 francs, which the editor was honest enough to pay me in entire, although he was forced to interrupt the publication of a work which raised a perfect storm. It was described as a deliberate insult to the people—a calumny on the workman. Then Catulle Mendes, who was at that time editing a literary review called 'La Republique des Lettres,' came and asked me to let him publish the rest of the story, and paid me 1,000 francs for the permission to do so. The story was greatly discussed. My friends said it was sure to be a great success. I myself did not expect to see it go beyond a tenth edition.

THE GREATEST SUCCESSES.

"'Nana' was the biggest success of the whole series, although it looks as if 'La Debacle' will be sold in even greater quantities. Ah! 'La Debacle'—I wince when I think of all the work it cost me. No book ever gave me so much trouble. First of all there was the material to be got together; but that was child's play compared to the task of condensing the material, which was so superabundant that for every page I wrote I could have written ten. 'Dr. Pascal,' on which I am at present engaged, is one of the books which have given me the least trouble, and which I have taken most pleasure in writing. In the first place, I have the intense satisfaction of knowing that when I write 'Finis' at the bottom of that book I shall have realized an ambition which I conceived over twenty-five years ago. And then I have the pleasure in 'Dr. Pascal,' because through Dr. Pascal as my mouthpiece I shall answer all the objections made against my work and my person. I shall refute the accusation that people delight to bring against me, that I revel in filth, and I shall equally rebut the argument that I am convicted out of my writings of being a sceptic and a misanthrope. On the contrary, I shall prove that I have great faith in the future of humanity, if only the terrible question of heredity, which indeed makes the children bear the sins of their fathers, can be overcome by a process of logical selection, if I may use the word in contradistinction to natural selection, in the union of the sexes.

SLOW AND SURE.

"Day after day during all these years I have regularly devoted three to four hours of my mornings to my task on the Rougon-Macquart series. From four to six pages of manuscript, of the size of a sheet of foolscap cut in half, is my average daily production. I write slowly and with some difficulty and always think out my sentences so carefully that there are few, if any, corrections in my manuscript. I should say that fifteen hundred words is my daily output. It is not much, but consider what that makes at the end of the year. When I have done what I consider a fair daily contribution I throw down my pen, even if I be in the middle of a sentence, but the subject is so much in my mind that the next morning I can resume the thread of my composition, even without reading over any part of what precedes. And so, day after day, I have added to my work, and look what a number of volumes have resulted from this method, slow and sure! Formerly, before my books brought me in such large sums, I used to work at my newspapers in the afternoons, writing a letter for a Russian journal and a quantity of literary and artistic criticisms for the French press. But now that I am independent of journalism, I spend my afternoons in leisure. When in Paris I am usually to be found in the art sales, for I am a great collector, and now that I have paid for my experience I often make very good bargains. Look, for instance, at this Tanagra statuette. Could anything be more exquisite? I cannot tell you what a thrill of pleasure runs through me each time I take it in my hands. In the summer I am usually down at Medan, a place which I bought years ago for 9,000 francs, at a time when I thought it folly to spend such a sum, and on which I have since spent twenty times that amount. There, as in Paris, I work regularly every day, but my afternoons are spent in my gardens, or on the island in the Seine opposite my house. Sometimes I boat, but I am not fond of violent exercise other than walking, in which I still take as much pleasure as when, with my friends Baille and Cezanne, I used to roam for days together over the hills around Aix."

"And in the future?"

"There is 'Lourdes,' which I have to write, and on which I am already working preliminarily. But I do not expect to be able to begin writing it until next October. And after that I don't know. Tales for children would be what I should most like to write, or perhaps I may carry out a pet scheme of mine and write a history of French literature, which will be quite different from what has ever been written on the subject before."

THE ACADEMY.

"And you still maintain your desire to enter the French Academy?"

"Oh, certainly. But it will be a long time before I shall be elected. The Academicians object to my books, and that is a fatal objection. As to my person they find no fault. They admit that I am presentable enough in a drawing-room, that I don't dress extravagantly, that I have no debts, and that I lead a sober, decent, respectable life. But they can't forgive me my books. If I have made up my mind to persist in my attempt to become a member of that society it is more for the novel than for myself that I am fighting. I want the novel to be recognized as the most important form of literature next to lyric poetry of the century. And the present constitution of the Academy does not recognize this fact. The novel is still in the eyes of the Academicians what it was when novels were first written, a literary trifle that sat very low down at the table of the banquet of literature. Yes, I shall go on and on. Each time that an Academician dies I shall wait the month of mourning and then I shall write to the secretary and make my declaration that I am a candidate for the seat. I shall continue doing this for years and years, as long as I live, in fact. The Academy will not be able to say, as it says of many other men of letters to whom it refused entrance, that it was because I had not patience and did not wait long enough. If the Academy, in spite of my repeated applications, refuses me admittance, and if in fifty years from now my books hold any place in French literature, she will have some difficulty in justifying herself before posterity."

"Have you still any intention of writing for the stage?"

"No. I think that that is an ambition that I have at last abandoned, reluctant as I am to abandoned any ambitions that I have formed. But I begin to think that I have not the capacity that is requisite for the stage. Thus I was terribly disappointed at the way in which 'Une Page d'Amour,' which is now being performed, was adapted from my novel. I have tried many times to create myself a place among dramatists of France, and do not seem to have much chance of succeeding. Tant pis. I must console myself with the thought that one can say what one wants to say very much better in a novel than in a play."

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