

## COMING-OF-AGE

### OF THE CORBETT CONCERTS AT MIDDLESBROUGH.

The Town Hall was well filled on Wednesday at the inauguration of the "Corbett" subscription concerts for the season 1911-12. The artists were of great distinction and renown in their respective spheres. Madame Donalds's delightful vocal work is one of the memories of last season, while Herr Kreisler we recognise as one of our most virile and artistic exponents of violin music. Any mere sentimentality is entirely foreign to his nature. His readings are characterized by a strong, healthy, manliness, yet full of delicacy and refinement when occasions demand.

To a large number of habitués the initial appearance of M. Rachmaninoff, who is equally distinguished as a pianist, composer, or conductor, was the supreme attraction.

Before proceeding with the programme Mr Corbett announced that this marked the coming of age of these subscription concerts, and thanked his patrons for their support during the past years. A short sketch recalling the many famous artists from every quarter of the globe who have appeared at these concerts would be of more than ordinary interest.

Madame Donalds's opening number was "Mi Chiamano Mimì," an excerpt from Puccini's "La Bohème," which undoubtedly lost something by its dissociation from the context. In response to an encore she gave the familiar "Within a mile of Edinboro' town," with truly humorous facial expression. The revival of Bishop's "Should be upbraided," later on, also came in for warm applause, and she responded with "Love's Way," by Tosti. Finally she gave a group of three songs—"Bon Soir," "Good and bad luck," two musical and attractive songs by Mr Corbett, and "Love's Whisper," a dainty song by Wilby, with which she again captivated her hearers as on the occasion of her last visit. For this she responded with another old favourite Scotch song, "Robin Arden."

Schubert's Rondo in B minor for violin and piano, played by M. Rachmaninoff and Herr Kreisler was the opening number. This was one of such beauty, the principal subject being of striking originality. The two artists gave a superb rendering, culminating in the coda which was played with great brilliancy.

M. Rachmaninoff's first group of solos were entirely his own composition—viz., "Elegie," "Polichinelle," "Bavaroise," and "Humoresque." His playing has a distinctive character, all his own; combining a magnificent technique with endless variety of touch, he is able to give full effect to the varying and subtle emotions of his music, making it supremely attractive to the listener.

The "Polichinelle" and "Humoresque" were the favourite numbers. His playing of his four preludes aroused the audience to a great pitch of enthusiasm, and he added the C Sharp Minor one—his universally popular work. This created a desire for more, and after a friendly contest between audience and player he eventually complied, and good-naturedly repeated the prelude.

Kreisler, as on former occasions, happily presented a group of solos varied in character, selected from German, French, and Italian composers of the 17th and 18th Centuries—viz., "Grave," by Friedmann Bach; "Aubade Paganini," Couperin; "Fughetta," Tartini; "La Chasse," Carrié; and "Tempo di Menuetto," Paganini.

These proved exceedingly interesting, and were played in that finished style which we are now accustomed to expect from this artist. Outstanding features were the clean, taut, double stopping in "La Chasse," and the rare spirit with which he gave the "Tempo di Menuetto." An air with variations by Tartini was played as an extra. In his later group of solos the exorcist was also the composer of the first two pieces, "Caprice Violoncello" and "Tambourin Chinois," followed by Paganini's "18th Caprice" as a finale. The two former were both of marked originality, containing many peculiar rhythmic effects. The Paganini "Caprice" was given with marvellous technical skill.

Mr Corbett ably accompanied the vocal items, and Mr Haddon Squire the instrumental.—W. J. S.

#### Dress at the Concert.

Falling on the night after the banquet in Prince Arthur of Connaught, the occasion was even more festive than is usual for the first concert of the season, and things sartorial were in the ascendant. Veritable triumphs of modiste skill met one on every side, beautifully draped cloaks half hiding, half revealing glimpses of gorgeous underclothes in gold and silver, and delicate-trimmed satins veiled with contrasting colours in transparencies or with black.

Several worthy examples of the new-traped evening coats were in evidence, notably one in richest violet rose satin, which clung round the wearer in the approved style of the moment, and was looped up at the back and sides with lovely tasselled ornaments in grey embroidery and beads, the neck and fronts also having their share of the exquisite trimming. The gown covered by this delightful garment was equally charming and out of the common. Of a soft grey blue silk, it had a wide border of floral design in blues and greys and a band of amethyst grey above, while beautiful embroideries in the same tones of colouring appeared on the décolletage. A daring effort was gained by a fur-trimmed frock in rich cerise satin veiled with royal blue.

A dainty gown was in pale blue tulle having the skirt drawn in to the figure with very wide bands of gold embroidery. Many tones of amethyst, violet and peonias were seen; one, in the latter shade, combining pale blue silk in its construction very successfully.

The elegance of black and white was shown very decisively in a sleek gown of grey and white striped silk over which was thrown a Princess gown of fine black hair; while a novelty as regards colour was seen in a gown of yellow satin, which had a trim and elegant veiling of black tulle, further adorned with beautiful cut jet bead necktie and belts.