TO MELPOMENE.

{This ode of Horace, famous in all time for sweetness and dignity, is translated in the last number of *Blackwood*.}

"Quem tu, Melpomene, semel,"

Whom thou, Melpomene
Hast once with still bright aspect marked at birth,
On him no Isthmian toils
Shall shed the fame of an athlete's fame;

Him shall no fiery steed
Revish to victory in Achaian car;
No him the warlike deeds
Shall from the hill-top of the Capitol

Show to a world's applause
The glorious image of a conquering chief,
With Delian leaves adorned,
Who crushed the swelling menaces of kings;

Yet him shall streams that flow
Through Tiribur, and the thick-growing locks
Of the green forest-kings,
Endow with lordship—Ah! Dorian song,

Me have the sons of Rome,
Sovereign of cities, delighted to enrol amidst
The chiefs of lyric lore,
And now ev'n Envy bites with milder fang.

O thou Pierian Muse,
That wo'st the sweet cloth of the golden shell,
Thou who, if such thy will,
Conclud'st mute fishes radical as swans,

Thine is the boon, all thine,
That I am singled from the passers-by,
"Lyrist of Roman song!"
Thine that I breathe and please, if please I may.

ART ITEMS.

Modern Frescoes in Germany.

We were talking a few days since of the artistic quality of Kaulbach's and Cornelius's fresco paintings in Berlin and Munich; a correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who has recently examined them, discusses, with more chemistry than criticism the economy of the German recipes for fresco-painting, and gives a high testimony to the skill exercised by the painters of that country in applying their materials for permanent wear:

"The calumnious decay of frescoes in England makes the condition of mural paintings in Germany a matter of considerable interest. The writer of this paper, after an interval of ten years, has revisited the chief German frescoes, and is able to report that comparatively little change has taken place in their condition during this period, and that the fact that wall paintings, with some exceptions hereafter mentioned, remain pretty much in the same state as when first painted.

"In Munich it is only under conditions absolutely destructive that frescoes have suffered. That vast composition, some sixty feet high, 'The Last Judgment, in the Church of St. Ludwig, painted by Cornelius thirty years ago, is just as fresh as when first turned out of hand; it is, in fact, almost too bright and crude; certainly age has not brought mellowness. There is no blistering, rotiness, or peeling away of the surface, no disintegration or discoloring of the pigments, as with our frescoes at Westminster. In like manner, the two other great works of famous churches in Munich, All Saints and the Basilica, which rank, perhaps, as the most successful examples of polychrome decoration in Munich, still preserve not only their original brilliancy of color, but the delicacy and the tenderness of tertiary tones for which the late Professor Hess was unrivalled. Furthermore, I can report the ambitious but by no means pleasing frescoes of Cornelius in Globach, in perfect preservation. Equally well conserved are the Nibelungen-compositions, wherewith the illustrious and now venerable Julius Schnorr von Karolsfeld decorated the King's palace more than ten years ago; while, be it observed, the other works in the same interior, not in fresco, but encaustic, show signs of incipient decay.

"At the same time, I am bound to record the damage done to certain frescoes in Munich, under conditions apparently innocuous. Firstly, the loggia of the Old Pinakothek, covered with wall paintings after the designs of Cornelius, has so far suffered in the lower portion, exposed directly to the heat of the sun, as to need entire repainting. But no medium probably could withstand the burning sunlight of this position. And that this, the only instance of decided destruction of an internal fresco, may be assigned to a wholly exceptional cause, is shown by the fact that the frescoe in the shadowed vault of the same loggia, not so exposed, are just as fresh as when first painted. The only other instances of destruction are of works in the open air, unprotected from the elements, and, in these cases, are so rapidly and widely various. Thus the ill-judged frescoes by Kaulbach on the outer walls of the New Pinakothek have suffered materially from rain and snow and ice: it can easily be imagined that a damp, moist wind from the south, followed by a keen icy blast from the north, is not peculiarly preservative of frescoes. Like beasts cleanly, it is well known, have long since proved fatal to the paintings which Giovanni Dupre made on the Grand Canal of Venice. In fact, in Germany these out-door frescoes, executed in defiance of the elements, seem to have fared better than in Italy. Kaulbach's decorative pictures might pass as a classical observer as uninjured: a photograph of the New Pinakothek now before me shows every composition distinct in detail. Of minor moments are certain other external wall paintings. The frieze outside the Bazar of Munich is considerably damaged; also the indifferent landscapes, with King Ludwig's added poetry, adorn the open arcades of the Hof Garten, are in parts absolutely obliterated. It may be received with thankfulness that in Munich frescoes which are worthless have suffered most, while the best have, by a kind Providence, been preserved. It has been the custom, in palliation of the blunders committed by English painters and the Royal Commission on the Fine Arts, to plead in excuse the destruction of the above-mentioned frescoes in Munich: "But the cases are in no way parallel. In Munich not a single work worth preserving has perished; in fact, all the great pictures of Cornelius, Hess and Schnorr are to this moment intact. Moreover, not a single work of fresco has suffered that has been reasonably well preserved. In fact, it would be to expect the process to bear wise, no other method could resist.

"Fresco-painting having been persistently practised in Germany for full thirty years, it is natural that what has by this time extended over a wide area. Thus, as at north as Aix-la-Chapelle do we come upon a series of eight wall pictures covering a surface of 9,000 square feet. These historic compositions, which commemorate the reign of Charlemagne—hold in conception, original in treatment—were commenced by Alfred Rethel nearly twenty years ago. It is probable that the pigments may be deemed somewhat opaque, the colors crude, and the execution rather coarse. Yet no one will venture to assert that the works are other than when they came from artist's hands. They are substantially scathless. They have, in short, escaped all that has befallen our English frescoes. They have not blistered, they have not peeled away; the colors do not lie on the surface, but are as sure as brushed off from the walls. The sole injury I noted was an accidental scratch or scrape from a nail or ladder.

"In like manner I am glad to report that Professor Bendemann's elaborate frescoes, which ten years since I saw in process of painting in the royal castle at Dresden, are well preserved. There are few more satisfactory and impressive examples of mural decoration in Europe than this grand throne room and its companion ball-room. On close examination a slight abrasion, crumbling away, or discoloration of the surface, may be detected in a monochrome frieze at the ceiling; that loss must be admitted. Perchance damp may have entered through a broken tile, or the frostar may at this point have had something wrong in its constituent parts. The injury, at all events, was the result of a partial, not of a prevalent defect. There is, in short, every likelihood that these frescoes will, if tolerably well cared for, last for centuries yet to come.

"The city of Spires I visited in order to make acquaintance with an imposing colonade of frescoes, known to me only by engravings — the wall pictures wherewith Schraudolph, an illustrious disciple in the school of German spiritual art, has decorated the nave, transepts, and choir of the cathedral. It is not my purpose here to speak of purely art merits, otherwise I might say that Schraudolph has, in this elaborate decoration of a grand and spacious interior, proved himself in design and other pictorial elements inferior not only to the elder masters of Munich, but to Carl Muller, Itzenbach and Deger, whose wall pictures are the glory of Remagen. Still, decoratively merely, the interior of Spires will reward a pilgrimage. I should like to see similar attempts in our cold and crude English churches. I must, however, not be tempted away from my immediate point, the preservation or otherwise of these German frescoes. In Spires I cannot bound to admit that while these mural decorations at Spires were only too crude and new, here and there slight discoloration was apparent. An opera-glass only could disclose the change, and the total damage would scarcely average one square inch in twenty feet. It is just possible that this slight yielding to destructive agents may be the precursor to wider operations. Still I incline to the opinion that the damage is partial and accidental.

"Remagen on the Rhine I revisited not without misgivings; but I found that what had (in the year 1858) I was in the church of St. Apollinaris, when Deger was still painting the colossal figure of Christ in the apse, not the slightest change has appeared in the surface of the frescoes. This absolute state of preservation was all the more unexpected from the extreme delicacy of the frescoes; they are not so much broad and sketchy as detailed, softly rounded, and highly elaborate. In this they depart at all events from early Italian precedents. And the danger has thus been all the greater that the balance of effect made might be lost and the tone of color marred. But after the lapse of ten years this lovely interior still preserves its beauty. I repeat—the pictures preserve their tone and are well brought together; they maintain unity of effect with the architectural structure and its polychromic accessories. Had the frescoes been ravaged by the elements this delicious harmony must have been reduced to discord, of course.

"To the above report one be added a word on the condition of the grand and gigantic 'water-glass' wall paintings now completed in the Pinakothek in Berlin. It is well known that on the failure of frescoes in the Palace at Westminster the 'water-glass' process was adopted as a substitute; yet it is now understood that Mr. Maclise and Mr. E. M. Ward are dissatisfied with the results. It may, then, be important, not only that our artists, but that the House of Commons and Royal Commission, should learn that both Kaulbach and the people of Berlin are and have good reason to be perfectly content with the newly discovered process as exemplified in the vast 'Peppenheim of the Alamanni.' The effect is admirable, and the first picture executed is as sound as the last.

"The above recital of facts seems to substantiate the conclusion that frescoes in Germany, when not maltreated, are as permanent as easel pictures. Thus it would seem that the Germans, more fortunate than the English, have not only discovered and revived the lost art of Italian fresco-painting, and that the art thus revived is zealously practised now to this very moment. In another of this last assertion I may quote four vast frescoes recently executed in the new museum of Cologne by Professor Steinle, the master of our English Academician, F. Leighton. Also must not be forgotten a water-image of wall pictures designed and completed within the last five years in the National Bavarian Museum at Munich. These recent achievements indicate that in Germany faith remains unshaken in the permanence of the fresco process.

The History of "Faust."

The history of Gounod's opera, "Faust," in London, is a very curious one. It is notorious that a city but one friend, Mr. Chorley, of the Athenæum, Mr. Lumley, the lessee of the opera, was delighted with it, and with much difficulty persuaded Messrs. Chappell & Co., the great music publishers, to buy the property for England, he furnishing an English version. More out of regard for Mr. Chorley than for any other feeling, they bought the opera, and placed it tranquilly away on their shelves, to wait the occasion, from which they had not the slightest expectation of ever taking it down. The only English libretto, which they printed with themselves upon, was the smallness of the pecuniary sacrifice. The general belief was that they did not cost them more than a hundred pounds or so. Meanwhile the opera was making way in Paris. Mme. Ponchelson, the tenor, then lessee of the Covent Garden Opera-house, thought worth while looking at this new score. Accordingly he gave it to his conductor, the late Alfred Mellon, and asked his opinion upon it. "Nothing in it," said Mr. Mellon, hastily and unsoundingly, as Mr. Harrison to this day believes. "No use doing it. Something perhaps might be done with the Soldiers' Chorus." So, to fortify himself a little more, Mr. Harrison wrote down to an eminent English composer then in Paris, "Dear — — , he wrote, 'go and see *Faust*. I should like to do it, if you think it will do.' The reply was "Don't think of it, for Heaven's sake! Of all the crude, weak, wretched things, this is about the very worst. I implore you not to do it." Mr. Harrison naturally did not risk it after that, and he (Lumley) lost the opportunity of a magnificent fortune. A year later, Mapleson produced it at Her Majesty's Theatre. Eye-witnesses, who were then in the employ of Chappell & Co. could get their engravers and printers to work, all London was rushing to buy the lavorite airs of *Faust*.

French slunders About Gnaiu.

The editors of the Paris semi-official papers have now performed a more ridiculous summersault than in regard to General Grant. After vilifying him all summer, and assuring all of Brick Pomeroy's slanders about the President-elect, they induced Grant suddenly to take an active part in the canvass to defeat the prevent the election of its Republican candidate for the Presidency. The distinguished effect which the organ of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs asserted that the election of Grant and Colfax was inevitable, and, moreover, shows that the French embassador at Washington, who has misinformed his government about the political prospects in the United States. If he did, he only imitated the blunders of his predecessor, Mercier, who at Louis Napoleon's *jeux pas* in regard to the United States since the year 1860, were owing to the ridiculous reports sent him by his ministers in Washington. The embassadors are changed so often that none of them are very familiar with the affairs of the United States, and their attaches who are petted by the aristocracy of Washington think that that class of society is a true representative of public opinion in America. Even in 1864 the French embassador at Washington assented most positively to the disruption of the Union was an accomplished fact, and that the Federal Government would not continue the struggle for any length of time; and in 1866 the same source predicted with the same firmness, the success of A. J. "my policy," and the repudiation by the people of the members of Congress opposing President Johnson.

A Wedding in Norway.

On one occasion we were fortunate enough to witness an old-fashioned wedding or *brylup*, the word signifies the race for the bride, and alluded to the custom of marriage by capture, which has been shown to have prevailed in ancient times among all the savage nations in the world. We thought that we could trace the influence of the tradition in the wedding which we attended, where the shouts and excited rushings, with the firing of guns and pistols, raised all the din and confusion of a real battle for the bride. The bride's father sat outside the house among the elders of the village with a silver spigot in his hand. He was served from the barrel at his side into a massive peg-tankard, inscribed with verses in the Hardanger dialect; and the bride herself, smiling through her tears, handed the stronger drinks in finely-enchased cups to all who asked for them. "Skaal" and long life to her. At last the time came for the service in a church across the water. The bridegroom no longer dangled his bonnet, but helped to push off the boats; the flags waved, the bride was embraced, and amid a parting salute from all our artillery at once, the wedding cortège departed. We had been permitted in the morning, whilst the bride's hair was being plaited in thick coils of a shape that resembled a crown, to inspect her ornaments, which had been heirlooms in the family for several generations. The most valuable of course was the crown, silver-gilt and adorned with garnets, which was of a more massive pattern than those which we had seen in the Bergen shops; it differed from them, moreover, in being hung with gilt pendants, bells and tufts of colored wool. A fine breastpiece, filigree brooches, and a silver marriage-belt complete the list of her principal adornments.

The following description of the belt of a rich lady in Iceland applies equally to that of the Hardanger bride: "The petticoat is fastened by means of a girdle nearly five feet in length, composed of a number of oblong pieces of silver about an inch and a half long and one inch wide, sewed with their extremities close together upon a piece of strong silver-cloth, so that it forms number of joints, and is easily bent round the body and fastened with a buckle; one end is suffered to hang down in front of the apron and nearly reaches the bottom of it. All the joints are gilt and beautifully ornamented with open work and small knobs of silver. After the wedding a feast commenced which lasted for nearly three days, as far as we could judge by the succession of jaded revelers who returned in scattered boat-loads from the bride's new home across the water. The king of the feast was her father, who boasted afterwards of his strength of mind and body which had enabled him, like Socrates, to drink down all the boon companions, and return unencumbered by the flow of *Port ay Punch ay Brandewein*. A few nights afterwards we joined a revel of a more pleasing kind, the lads and lasses of the village having been invited to a dance in the kitchen of the chief farmhouse. A fiddle and a wooden flute, lack of beer completed the simple preparations of the ball, and the young people merrily engaged in their favorite Sultan Polka and the Jenny Lind, which here they call the Hamburg dance. We were much amused at the strangeness of the Halling dance, which was performed with great success by the most agile of the village lads. They danced round the floor with a solemn face to a soft monotonous tune, casting the eyes now and then upon a large nail which had been driven into the centre of the low wooden roof. Then, at a sudden signal, as he jumped beneath the nail, he turned a sudden somersault, and struck it with his clasp knife, which he brought down a great applause at each successful repetition of the feat.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

Freezing the Brain.

{From the American Educational Monthly.}

The discovery that the brain of a living animal could be frozen, and afterward could recover, was made by Dr. Arnott, physician, who solified the brain of a pigeon by exposing it to a freezing mixture. Here research stopped, because, with an ordinary freezing mixture, it was not possible to act on the individual parts of the organ, but the importance of the discovery is not the less on that account. It was a marvelous revealing. Life was not lost, but it was! Here was a living organ of mind, a centre of power of all guiding power, of all volition. It took in every motion of the nerves to which it was spread. It took in light and form and color by the eye; it took in sound by the ear, it took motion and substance by the touch: odor by the nostrils: and taste by the mouth. It gave out, in return, in response, motion, voice, expression—all else that demonstrates a living animal. Still, it, the animal was asleep, as without it, the animal was a mere vegetable. And this organ, the very centre and soul of the living organism, was by mere freezing, put out, for a time made dead—all its powers frozen. And this organ, set free, recovered its functions back again, and, as we know now by further observations, its functions are unimpaired. Surely, this was the discovery of a new world.

The Story of a Bank-Note.

The science of chemistry has been put to a hard test lately in Prussia. At the bank of a provincial town there appeared a peasant with an old note of the Prussian bank, and asked the cashier to change that for him. On close examination one little scrap was found connected with the number of a ten-thaler bank-note, it was pulp, and nothing could be made of it. The poor peasant then explained matters. He had brought eighty thalers in bank-notes from the market, and had lost the little bundle in the stable. There an eager goat found it, and proceeded calmly to eat it up. The peasant having become aware of his loss, rushed back into the stable, and just entered it in time to perceive the last morsel of a tenth note disappearing. His wife, too, was on the spot, and helped to fill the goat at once. This had been done, and there was the result. All the printing having been almost entirely obliterated, the question has arisen whether it might be possible to restore some portions of it by chemical agencies, or to discover by means of a powerful microscope traces which to the naked eye are invisible. The peasant in the interval has received the value of the note, and a promise that everything possible shall be done for him by the authorities.

A Legend of a Polish Salt Mine.

In the last number of *Putnam's Magazine* there is a description of a Polish salt mine, and of a little chapel far down in the earth, concerning which the following account is given:

"It is devoted to the memory of the queen wife of one of Poland's early kings, to whom Heaven vouchsafed, in 1252, the boon of bestowing the knowledge of these wondrous treasures on her imperiahed subjects. She was afar off in Hungary, the legend says, and was ignorant of her husband's marriage to a native land, she was ordered, by her patron saint, to cast a precious ring, which she most valued of all her trinkets, into a deep well. She did it in simple faith, and, when she returned to her home at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains, some peasants brought her a piece of rock salt, believing it to be a costly jewel. It was of no value in itself, but, oh wonder! in the heart of the transparent mass her ring lay imbedded. She understood the revelation from on high—ordered search to be made for more of the shining substance, and thus were discovered the great mines of Wieliczka, which have ever since been a source of greater wealth than the richest mines of gold or of diamonds."

CITY ORDINANCES.

AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION to the Department of Highways, Bridges, Sewers, &c. to pay deficiencies of 1867.

SECTION 1. The Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia do ordain, That the sum of three thousand one hundred and seventy-two dollars and seventeen cents be and the same is hereby appropriated to the Department of Highways, Bridges, Sewers, &c., to pay deficiencies of 1867.

To John Kinzey, repairing road, one hundred and five dollars.

To E. S. McGlinchy, balance on repairing, eighty-three dollars and twenty cents.

To E. S. McGlinchy, building cobble stone, one hundred and twenty-five dollars.

To M. Uhler, cobble stone, one hundred and sixty-two dollars and seventy-five cents.

To S. B. Eastburn, grading Church street, three hundred and seventy-five dollars.

To James S. Huber, grading Apsley street, five hundred dollars.

To James Holgate, paving intersection, one hundred and twenty-eight dollars and sixty cents.

To George W. Mooney, Canton street sewer, one hundred and ninety-one dollars and fifty-four cents.

To George W. Mooney, Canton street sewer, eighty dollars.

To J. B. Lamon, smithwork, twelve dollars and thirty-six cents.

To S. J. Creswell & Son, manhole cover, eighteen dollars.

To Harmon Johnson, coal, twelve dollars and fifty cents.

To J. H. Hancock, coal, seven dollars.

To B. F. Dutton, Hamilton street sewer, three hundred and sixty dollars.

To Patrick McEntee, paving intersection, one hundred and one dollars and ninety-two cents.

To Christopher Relley, smithwork, three dollars and twenty-five cents.

To Griffith & Evans, coal, seventeen dollars.

To William C. Johnston, repairing roads, two hundred and seventy-seven dollars and seventy-seven cents.

To Joseph D. Fress, repairing roads, one hundred and sixty-five dollars and thirty-five cents.

To E. Thomas & Son, hardware, five dollars and twenty-five cents.

To John Lessig, road barrow, twenty dollars.

To Cassidy & Willcey, new inlets, two hundred and fifty dollars.

To John Lessig, macadamizing, one hundred and fifty-nine dollars and ninety-six cents.

The money to pay the sum shall be drawn by the Chief Commissioner of Highways in conformity with existing ordinances.

JOSEPH F. MARCER,
President of Common Council.

ATTEST—JOHN LEKNSES,
Clerk of Common Council.

WILLIAM H. STOKLEY,
President of Select Council.

Approved this twenty-second day of November, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, (A. D. 1868).

MORTON McMICHAEL,
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ONE HUNDRED MILLIONS,
And the remainder is being pushed forward with unabated vigor.
Three hundred miles of the road have been finished for the month of July just was as follows, to-wit:
Gross Earnings $1,000,000 00
Expenses 350,000 00
Leaving a net income of $650,000 00
Which was more than enough to pay the interest on the bonds for the month, and leave a surplus of $150,000 00 for the month of July just was as follows, to-wit:
Gross Earnings $1,000,000 00
Expenses 350,000 00
Leaving a net income of $650,000 00
Which was more than enough to pay the interest on the bonds