

NOVEMBER 3, 1908.

W. H. CUMMINGS, ESQ., MUS. D., F.S.A.,

PRESIDENT,

IN THE CHAIR.

THE HARP.

BY ALFRED KASTNER.

(S.8) The most celebrated German harpists of our time are Albert Zabel, Wilhelm Posse, and Franz Poenitz. Albert Zabel, who, since his early years, has lived in Petersburg as soloist to the Czar, is the author of several effective pieces and a Concerto, which was performed lately at Evolian Hall by a Russian harp virtuoso.

(S.9) Posse has the reputation of possessing the most marvellous technique on the harp to-day. He has travelled much in his country, is professor at the Royal Academy in Berlin, and was on intimate terms with Wagner, who even took his advice as

to how to write for the harp. He was also a close friend of Liszt, and the great master pronounced him to be the first artist on his instrument. Posse published a few pieces and some fine virtuoso studies.

But his colleague Poenitz, who, as Court Harpist in Berlin, is still living, is more prominent as a composer for the instrument, and I consider that his works have the greatest musical value of all the modern harp literature written by harpists. This refers particularly to his "Nordisch Ballade," as it requires the highest artistic standard. We do not hear it often, and when it is on the programme it is not always a pleasure to listen to it. Poenitz wrote, amongst others, two beautiful songs with harp accompaniment, and a Nocturne for clarinet and harp which I have brought to a first hearing at one of my recitals.