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EDITORIAL

Mozart died in 1791, just as the literary and artistic movement which came to be known as Romanticism was getting under way. One result of this timing is that his death and burial, the circumstances of which remained largely unremarked, have made him a ripe subject for such romantic conjunctions as genius and poverty, death and promise, and so on. If "The Death of Chatterton" can become a romantic icon, why not the death of Mozart? In the latter instance, the mesmeric quality of the image is greatly enhanced by the belief in the possibility that his death, at what is supposed to be such an early age, 35 years, cannot have been due to natural causes. Whichever way his death is viewed, Mozart is made to seem a victim, at its most macabre of course the victim of a professionally jealous rival composer, Salieri.

In spite of these imaginings, however, not a little is actually known about the medicine of Mozart's time, and a good deal can be reasonably reconstructed about his health, the risks that may have attended it, and the possible causes of his death. It was with the intention of bringing together this knowledge that Dr. E. Carl Abbott organized a symposium at Dalhousie University on the bicentenary of Mozart's death, entitled "Medicine in the Age of Mozart." One thing that the symposium certainly made clear was that murder is not the most likely explanation of Mozart's death.

Papers from that symposium make up the major part of this issue of *Dalhousie Review*. We thank Dr. Abbott and Dr. Mary Wheeler for their assistance with the preparation of the symposium papers for publication.

A. R. A.