



MUSICAL CIRCLES.

A most unsatisfactory way of dealing with the public has arisen in this city with regard to concerts. I allude to the altering of the numbers on a concert programme. There seems to be no adequate reason why the printed list of songs, etc., given to the public should not be carried out and it is not only mystifying, but a breach of faith. One reads that certain selections are to be given which are especial favorites and for that reason go to a certain performance only to find that the very ones promised, are substituted by others less pleasing. This objection of mine was noticeable at the organ recital in Exmouth street church on last Tuesday evening.

Another objection I have to urge in reference to the same recital was the continued applause. I was much astonished to find that it was permitted. It was certainly a feature of the evening that did credit neither to the audience nor to the authorities of the church.

Mr. W. Harry Watts, of the Methodist church, Moncton, was the soloist on the organ and also accompanied the songs. He showed himself to be an organist of ability and a most sympathetic accompanist. It is no easy matter to get much variety of combinations with a one manual organ of about 12 stops—and this clever performer did so well, that I should like very much to hear him on a fair sized organ like the Trinity church instrument, where he would have a chance to play without having his hands on the stops all the time.

Mrs. C. W. Harrison did not seem to be quite up to the mark of her late performance in the Opera House. She was occasionally faulty in tone and it seemed to be an effort for her to sing—which was in great contrast to the occasion I have referred to. She was at her best in "Let the Bright Seraphim." Mr. E. J. Harrison's cornet obligato was most satisfactory, he was in tune throughout; a necessity for the successful performance of this masterpiece of Handel.

Mr. A. H. Lindsay gave two old favorites, "The Chorister" and "The Palms." I do not like his singing of either and was sorry that as the programme said he would sing "Thus when the Sun," he substituted "The Palms."

The Germain street quartette sang "Father in Heaven," which was one of the pieces they rendered the other Sunday evening in their own church. It did not go as well as then, the organ being much too loud, the first tenor being a little uncertain, and the two basses not modulating so carefully as previously. Mr. Perkins sang his solo excellently and the quartette was enjoyable in spite of the little errors noted.

Mr. Morton L. Harrison does not often appear as a soloist, but when he does he meets with a good reception. He was well accompanied by a Mr. March of England.

I have been asked by a correspondent what the real quality of a voice really is. Before I give my humble opinion on this point I would like to ask some of my readers if they can give me a definition of it.

Mr. D. Millar Olive has again taken charge of the music in the Kirk. I hear that at the re-opening of the church after its cleaning, sometime about Easter, a male quartette will come from Boston, Mr. Tom Daniel being the bass.

Tones and Undertones.

One of Queen Victoria's choicest treasures at Windsor Castle is Mozart's old harpsichord, which is described as being a " quaint, rather shabby looking instrument, with a double set of keys."

A story entitled "The Man who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo," has been having a great run in England. A report is current that the composer and singer, Charles Coburn, has already made more than \$1,500 in royalties, though it is stated that before singing it originally he offered the copyright to a well known firm of music publishers for \$750. They are probably sorry now that they did not accept his offer.

The bureau of music of the Columbian Exposition has issued a list of that portion of the special musical demonstrations to take place during the World's Fair for which dates have been absolutely fixed, beginning with May and ending in July. Although concerts by American artists have been arranged, and the programme, as given out, shows a notable representation of American singing associations, it does not contain the name of any work by any American composer.

The music hall seems to be about the best paying of public entertainment ventures in London, and the conversion of theatres into music halls and the opening of new halls goes on apace. The New Olympic Theatre is the latest to be converted into a theatre of varieties. The Empire Music Hall pays an average yearly dividend of 70 per cent; the Alhambra, 25 per cent; the Tivoli, 20 per cent, and the Pavilion 16 per cent—facts which may have had some influence on New York managers in recent and rumored experiments.

Referring to the fact that during September, M. Saint Saens, Dr. Mackenzie, and other foreign composers of eminence will visit the World's Fair, conducting several programmes of their own choral and instrumental works, as well as works of other composers of their respective countries. Reginald de Koven thinks it would certainly seem only fair that in an exposition presumably intended to encourage American art and industry in all its branches, a like opportunity should be extended to some American composer. America may not yet have attained any commanding eminence as musicians, but certainly something has been done in this direction, and that something is certainly entitled to representation at the World's Fair.

The annual meeting of the Oratorio society is to take place on Monday evening. The secretary in a circular addressed to the members, says that it is hoped to give "Elijah" about the end of May. The report will show an active membership of 121 and 314 of honorary members, an increase of 18 over last year. The average attendance at rehearsals has been 47. The small attendance at the two concerts given in December caused a loss of \$106.50, but despite of this there is a cash balance on hand of about \$150 and \$200, in addition to the dues outstanding. Two new departures are

noted, the establishing of a sight singing class and of a loan library of music. The financial standing of the society is better than it was last year and the outlook for the coming year is good.

TALK OF THE THEATRE.

After a long season of darkness the Opera House is to be opened on the 20th inst, by Wallace Hopper and his theatrical company. The advance notices state that he has excellent support headed by Miss Nella Robinson, and that both he and Miss Robinson are well known to the American theatre going people. As they omit to state whether they are best known in Alaska or New York we are left somewhat in darkness as to the merits of the coming organization. Wallace, however, is not altogether unknown in this province. He played about all the small towns throughout it some two years ago, but has never before ventured to pull into this city.

Ex-Rev. George C. Miln is to play "Julius Caesar" in London, and afterward will return to the United States.

W. A. Whitecar is away down south with Lillian Lewis doing good work in "Lady Lil" and "Therese Raquier."

Thomas W. Keene is said to have the most varied and valuable collection of mementoes in the possession of any actor.

Adelaide Randall is at the Bowdoin Square Theatre, Boston, in "McFee of Dublin," a farce comedy which is having a good run.

George Fawcett has made a great hit as the old coxswain in "The Ensign." It is as fine a bit of character work as has been seen on the stage in a long time.

James A. Herne has had many valuable suggestions from his wife, Mrs. Katherine C. Herne, in the writing of "Shore Acres." It is the custom of Mrs. Herne to sit in front at almost every performance, and watch for opportunities to improve the lines and situations.

The plot of "His Wedding Day" hinges upon a flask of brandy that is sent as a present and in which an opiate has been accidentally placed. Several of the characters drink from the flask and the owner suspects himself of murder and the situation leads to many amusing complications.

The position of a popular dramatist is, it appears from some details of Victorian Sardou's life just published, no sinecure. All the year round the great man is up at seven, and upon a cup of coffee does four hours' work. After dejeuner, at noon, he gets in two or three hours' writing, and the rest of the day is given to more technical worries, the interviewing of stage-managers and actors, and the supervision of details in the scenic department.

The Hon. and Rev. Canon Leigh, at whose house in Gloucester Place, Portman Square, the famous Fanny Kemble, his mother-in-law, died, has the walls of his dining-room adorned with incomparable portraits of three generations of her talented family, one or two of them having the characteristics of the old masters. It is noticeable that from generation to generation the straight eyebrows and fine eyes have been handed down, and they may still be noticed in the living descendants of the Kembles.

Since Mr. Thomas W. Keene was last seen in New York, his art which was always rich, ripe and racy, has matured most wonderfully. He engages at the Union Square Theatre now nightly, with his legs foremost, thus adding, the very moment he appears a new bit of business to the proper impersonation of Richard III, which no tragedian before him had dreamed of. When Richard smiled the spectators were fascinated, and when in the course of his iniquities he grew more and more wicked, they waxed positively hilarious. Surely no tragedian ever caused so much merriment as did Mr. Keene, and let it be said that the results he attained were worked by perfectly legitimate means.

"A Woman of Importance," Oscar Wilde's new play, is soon to be produced by Beerbohm Tree at the Haymarket theatre, London. Mrs. Kendal is very anxious to play the leading female part, but is desirous of securing the American rights, which were sold immediately after the play was written to Charles Frohman. The latter has received cablegrams from Oscar Wilde, Beerbohm Tree and Mr. and Mrs. Kendal in relation to releasing the play for this country to the Kendals. Mr. Kendal has also cabled Daniel Frohman to try to secure the play for him. Charles Frohman has cabled the Kendals saying that he would dispose of only certain territory in America to them for \$20,000 cash. This is the first case on record of an English play that has not been produced for which English players are trying to secure the American rights, and are compelled to negotiate from England through an American manager.

Marcus Mayer is full of interesting data about stars he has been associated with. Here are some of the facts he narrates: Patti is a good traveller. She gets seasick a little, but that over she is soon on deck. She kills time by reading Moliere and other French Classics. Nicolini rushes for a billiard table on sea and on land. Bernhardt devotes her time to reading plays and writing her autobiography. She also plays poker, regardless of the limit. Nilsson likes the game but wants a dollar limit. Mary Anderson never plays cards. She used to read Shakespeare to fill in time in traveling. Henry Irving and Ellen Terry make books and pet dogs, in equal installments, their form of diversion. Coquelin and Hading squabble enough to kill a good deal of recreative time. Mrs. Langtry fills in with poetry, and as for Edwin Booth, he found traveling so wretched a business that he always endured the ordeal as the melancholy Dane.

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FRANZ LISZT.

An Account of the Musician's First Appearance in Paris.

The young men of today can hardly imagine the eclat, the magical prestige with which the name of Liszt flashed upon the horizon of the young musicians of the early part of the Second Empire—a name so foreign to the ears of a Frenchman, sharp and hissing as the edges of a sword that cuts through the air torn by the slavish Z as by a stroke of lightning.

The artist and the man seemed to belong to fairyland. After having embodied on the piano the spirit of romanticism, Liszt, leaving behind him the glittering trail of a meteor, disappeared for awhile behind the curtain of clouds which then veiled Germany—a Germany different from the one of our day: a mass of little kingdoms and independent duchies, bristling with turreted castles, and preserving even in its Gothic script the look of the middle ages, every trace of which had disappeared from France, in spite of the efforts of the poets to restore its beauty.

The greater part of the pieces which Liszt published seemed beyond the possibility of any execution but himself, and were so indeed, if played according to the old methods, which required perfect immobility of the whole body, the elbows close to the side, and allowed only a limited action of the forearm.

It was known that at the court of Weimar, disdainful of his former success, he was occupied with serious composition, dreaming of a renovation of art—a purpose which excited much anxious comment, as is always the case when a new world is to be explored or an accepted tradition broken. More gave ample ground for all sorts of surmises. Even the truth did not always appear probable when it was told about him.

It was said that at a concert of the Conservatory, after the "Pastoral Symphony" of Beethoven had been performed, he had dared to play the whole composition over again alone, the amazement of the audience being quickly replaced by a tremendous enthusiasm. Again it was said that another day, bored with the docility of the public, tired of seeing this lion, ready to tear to pieces any who displeased it forever fawning at his feet,—he determined to rouse it, and amused himself by coming late to a concert at the Italians, and calling on some fine ladies in their boxes, laughing and chatting, until the lion began to growl and roar. At last he seated himself at the piano, when the fury abated, the only demonstrations being those of pleasure and admiration.—Saint-Saens, in The Century.

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