

Musical and Dramatic.

IN MUSICAL CIRCLES.

The rehearsals of the Oratorio society were resumed last Monday evening after the Christmas vacation and the attendance was quite satisfactory. The work for this season is "Christ and His Soldiers." It is one of those productions that, apart from its intrinsic merit, requires substantial orchestral aid. Apropos of this feature of the productions by this society I was much pleased to learn that the suggestions in this connection that appeared in this department of PROGRESS last week, so commended themselves to the board of management of the society that prompt action was taken on the subject of an orchestra for the society at the meeting of last Monday evening. It goes without saying that there are a number of capable and clever musicians not yet connected with the society whose presence as members it is desirable to secure and who I think would cheerfully become identified with it if they were so advised. The board of management is evidently of this opinion also, and so desires such membership, that they passed the following resolution which speaks for itself:

The Oratorio society request the attendance of all interested in orchestral work to meet with them at their practice room on Monday evening next (Jan. 14) at 8 o'clock to take into consideration the formation of an orchestral association in connection with the Oratorio society.

This is a step in the right direction, and in the interests of the best music it is hoped every instrumentalist, professional or otherwise, whether at present a member of any orchestra or not, will avail himself or herself of this invitation and attend at the time and place specified. If this is done, the visitors will have opportunity to see the work of the society and the manner in which the rehearsals are conducted. There is a large amount of local pride in our city and its institutions, and St. John compares, not unfavorably already with the larger cities of Canada in everything that tends to the development of its inhabitants and their acceptance of all that refines and dignifies. I am informed that in connection with the large oratorio society of Toronto there is an orchestra, as an adjunct of the society, that numbers, in itself, somewhere about eighty persons. There is talent in St. John not inferior to that of Toronto and united action here on the part of all whose tastes or inclinations are similar, in a musical sense, will very soon put this city on the same if not a higher level than that now enjoyed by the city of the lakes.

Tones and Undertones.

The court says that Camille D'Arville may sing under any management she pleases.

The largest organ in the world is at Sydney, N. S. W., but it is partially a failure.

William Woolf, one of the best character comedians in the United States, is a member of the Louise Beaudet opera company.

The organ for St. Bartholomew's church in New York, recently completed is now the largest church organ in America.

Madame Nellie Melba enjoyed the performance of "Westward Ho!" from a box in the Boston Museum one evening last week.

Lillian Russell and her latest husband, Sig. Perugini, met at the residence of a mutual friend recently. It is said "they kissed and made up."

Here Carl Walther recently gave a most successful concert in Montreal, Mrs. L. G. Shaw being the accompanist. His first number was Tartini's Sonata.

"Rob Roy" will have had its 100th performance on the 10th, inst., at the Herald square theatre. On that occasion silver bon bon boxes were given away as souvenirs.

Mrs. Richard Blackmore, jr., (Louise Laine) gave a song recital in Boston last week. She was assisted by M. Timothee Adamowski, violinist, and Miss Angelina P. Loveland and M. Max Zach, accompanists.

Mr. Watkins Mills, the distinguished English baritone, recently gave a concert at Massey hall, in Toronto, of superior quality, but the press of that city complains of the fact that not more than 1,000 persons were present.

Sig. Perugini has resigned from the cast of "The Dragoon's Daughter," the new opera in which Louise Beaudet created the title role at the Castle Square theatre, Boston, this week. The signor has been succeeded by Mr. Jay Taylor, "a tenor of marked ability."

When the Bostonians produced their new opera, "Prince Ananias," those that remember how charmingly picturesque Jessie Bartlett Davis looked as Alan a Dale in "Robin Hood" were disappointed not to see her again as a boy. All that has been changed, however, in the new version of the opera, and Miss Davis now appears in tights.

Speaking of Stavenhagen, the great pianist a Boston paper of recent date says: "He is certainly an artist of merit, and disdains the outward eccentricities of long hair, bad manners and the make-up of the usual musician who appeals to the

public as a virtuoso. His gentlemanly and unobtrusive carriage, the real sentiment of his playing and the undoubted genius with which he is endowed, please all."

TALK OF THE THEATRE.

Wallace Hopper and associate members of his company still continue their performances at the Mechanic's Institute. It is but a fair inference that the efforts of this energetic manager are pleasing the people when one realizes the fact that the patronage is increasing nightly. Saturday night is not generally considered a favorable night for business, in theatrical circles in Saint John, but, if it has been the rule heretofore there has been an exception made in favor of Mr. Hopper's company, because the attendance in their theatre last Saturday evening was second only to their large business of Christmas and New Year's day. An increasing patronage is certain evidence of the popularity of a company. The repertoire of this company, is large and varied, both comedy and melo-drama being given with equal facility. Mr. Hopper is personally popular and his clever little leading lady, Miss Nella Robinson, has clearly established herself a favorite with the patrons of this theatre. The support is always good and of a character and quality superior to that of most road companies who play to popular prices. Indeed, among the gentlemen of this company is found not a little evidence of familiarity with what is known, to theatrical people, as "the legitimate." Their stay in this city has been prolonged beyond their original intention, their work is being appreciated; they are now acquainted here and are justified in the belief that when they again visit this city they will be coming among friends and will be cordially welcomed. Mr. Hopper has reason to congratulate himself in having such an efficient business man as Mr. Shafer to look after his interests.

Miss Nellie Ganthony was in Toronto last week.

Daly's company and Ada Rehan will open in London, Eng., May 20th.

An actress dropped dead in the wings on Christmas night in London, Eng. Tight lacing.

Joe Jefferson says, "No man loves the scene of his daily employment so much as the actor."

Miss Annie Russell will shortly appear in Boston in "The New Woman." It will be her first work in that city for four years.

There is no part for Ada Rehan in Daly's new play "The Queen of the Air." The question is asked, will it succeed without her?

"Cissy" Lottus does not realize Augustin Daly's ideas and he has cancelled her contract. She will appear at Keester and Bial's, it is said.

More than 150 people are engaged in the production of the play "Humanity," and 26 stage hands are required to handle the massive scene and mechanical effects.

The W. R. Dailey (May Maunery) stock company commences a four weeks' engagement at the Berkbank theatre in Los Angeles, Cal., the first week of February.

A clever writer says "Atmosphere is as essential to the integrity of dramatic pictures of a period as it is to the life of furniture. Given this, neither a well made play nor a well made table ever arrives at infirmity."

Dunjuro, the Japanese actor, who is to Japan what Henry Irving is in England, recently donated the entire receipts of his theatre for one week to the Red Cross hospital. Some nights there were \$5000 in the house.

Wilson Barrett, during his forthcoming tour in America, will have the strongest company of players he has ever engaged for his American tours. He will open at the Boston theatre on the 28th inst.

Marie Burress, a once leading lady of the Boston Museum company and who recently resigned from James O'Neill's company, was secretly married to a Mr. Guy Wilbur Currier of Lawrence Mass., about three weeks ago. Mr. Currier is worth \$100,000. His wife has abandoned the stage.

The recent performance of "The School for Scandal" in Boston by the Julia Marlowe Taber Company is vigorously scored by a capable critic of that city. This writer says: The performance of "The School for Scandal" by this company was in most instances a strictly modern performance and so far was unsatisfactory."

The work of Mr. Charles Collins as Sir Oliver in "The School for Scandal," by the Marlowe Taber company in Boston last week, is highly complimented. His work was "equally admirable in spirit and form." Mr. Collins will be remembered as one of the capable cast in "The Crust of Society" when presented in this city.

William (Billy) Owen, also a member of the Marlowe company, and remembered by the older play-goers in this city, played Sir Benjamin Backbite in "The School for Scandal." He "slid now and then" says the critic, "like a trombone from the low pitch

of the play's period to diverse high notes of modernity and back again, but was generally in the key of the piece."

Thomas W. Keene is playing Shakespearean roles on the Pacific coast. His Shylock is said to be "a direct departure in some respects from traditional readings and situations of the old school in which he received his first impressions of the role. He makes the Jew a few years younger and more erect than most Shakespearean actors have considered him and there is less of the cringing servility in the first act."

Mary Hampton was frightened by some saucy boys in the gallery during a performance of "Sowing the Wind" in a New Jersey theatre last week. The boys did not approve of the fine de siècle philosophy which the author places in the mouth of Rosamund (Mary Hampton) and the actress thought "they would hurl things on the stage." The boys were ejected. Has Mary discovered a new style of advertising?

HUMAN TARGETS.

A Profession Which Requires a Considerable Amount of Nerve.

"Tremendous risks? Well," he said, with remarkable coolness, "of course it is tempting death, if you put it in that sense; but it pays, for that very reason, and that is saying a good deal nowadays. I suppose we really do run a big risk every time we stand with the knives whizzing about us; but we've got so used to the risk that we've pretty well stared the dangerous element out of it. You know, it's like most other professions of this sort: there's such a lot in accustoming yourself to the work early in life."

This was in answer to a question I felt bound to put to one of two men who had just given an exhibition of their knife-throwing skill, at a town where I recently stayed. The display was so startling and hazardous in character as to almost stupefy an onlooker, and it took place in a circus arena. One performer stood, fixed immovable and with arms outstretched, against a wooden wall; while the other, from a distance of about twelve paces, hurled two-edged knives, haft foremost, in rapid succession, in such a dexterous manner as to enclose his living target in a frame of quivering blades.

"Why, yes," he went on. "Decidedly the knife-throwing business (which, I believe, originated in China) has almost died out in England. I can't explain it; there are plenty of people who flock eagerly to see anything with a dash of peril and excitement in it. But it's certain there was far more of it to be seen fifty years ago than now."

"Oh, no; you don't need to be especially gifted for the work. Of course, a nervous person would be quite out of his element in such a profession, because, you might say, a knife-thrower must have no nerves at all. He must keep always cool, and be able to hit a bull's-eye every time. There is no jugglery in our performance; that is a different line altogether. No one could place the knives in such a manner by mere trick or chance. What you saw was the result of years of incessant training and hard work."

"Mind, I don't deny that one man would acquire the knack of throwing—for there is a good deal in the knack—far more easily than another; but only in the sense that someone learn to use a rifle more readily than others. In both cases what you most need is a quick and sure eye, a steady hand and supple wrist, and plenty of confidence and power to concentrate the mind."

"The last is most important. Some years back, for example, I went into partnership with a man who could handle the knives beautifully; and yet the least disturbance—such as a shout or any noise in the audience—would invariably make his throw a bad, not to say a dangerous, one. One must fix his thoughts solely on the target, taking no more notice of the on-lookers than if they were dummies."

"Have I ever had a mishap? Several. They are inevitable at times. A year ago, when we were throwing at Manchester, a woman suddenly shrieked, and the consequence was that I transcribed my partner's ear, pinning it to the board—and just missing his brain."

"He paid it back, though soon after, by cutting a piece out of my neck. See the scar? A month seth-d on that spot just as he went to aim, and somehow it so caught his eye that he could not resist letting fly at it. That was a case of fascination, eh? You hear of such things."

"Oh, of course, there would be danger in training to the work with one another's bodies! But we practice with a dummy figure until we can make certain of our aim in any position. Ah, you may believe it wanted a lot of pluck to stand target for the first time! The knives are sharp—just feel one!"

"The most difficult trick to learn? Well, perhaps, that of sending three blades as you saw—one on either side the neck and one immediately over the skull, so as to fix the head hard and fast. It requires a deal of practice, too, to plant a blade between every finger of an outstretched hand. At some towns we have had to stop the performance because the audience got so excited, and it very often happens that we get as much hissing as applause. But we appreciate that."

FREEMAN'S CASE.

One Particularly Interesting to Women as It Deals With Their Troubles.

LEAMINGTON, Jan. 7.—It has been a cause of wonder to many people why women will neglect the first symptoms, and continue to suffer from ill health, and from debility, when the means of relief can so readily be obtained. Before a cure can be effected the work of the kidneys must be renewed, the blood cleared of poisonous material, and the ligaments and muscles strengthened and invigorated. The history of the case of Miss Nettie Freeman, of this village, whose life was saved by Dodd's Kidney Pills, has had one beneficial effect in that it has aroused scores of other women in this locality from the false modesty they were manifesting and as a result the sales of Dodd's Kidney Pills have been enormous, and the resultant good commensurate therewith.

THE ONE WRAK EYE.

A Simple Experiment by Which It May be Discovered.

"Yes," said the doctor, in a moment of unprofessional confidence, "the makers of optical instruments are turning out some wonderful appliances nowadays for discovering imperfections of vision, but I'll tell you of a plan for testing the respective strength of your eyes that is as simple as it is trustworthy. All you need is a stereoscope and a photograph. That arrangement in which the picture holder slides up and down a flat frame, trombone fashion, is the best sort of stereoscope for the purpose, although any will do, and the photograph that will give the best results is a cabinet size view of some locality with people in it. The modus operandi is simplicity itself."

"Put the photograph in the holder and focus it just enough so that you can see the faces clearly. Then close the left eye and look at the picture intently with your right eye while you count thirty slowly. Now close the right eye and look at the picture with the left eye for the same space of time. Then open both eyes and look at the picture without changing the focus. Something queer will happen. The figures on the one side of the picture will seem to move across the view and group themselves with those on the other side, and this is the point of the experiment—the figures will always move away from the weak eye. Moreover, they will move with a very precise relation of speed to the weakness of vision. If the left eye, for example, is quite weak, the figures will move very quickly across the plane of sight to the right side, while if there is but a slight defect the movement will be gradual, and so on."

"A queer thing about this experiment is that simple as it seems, it will bring out defects of vision that have never been suspected, and another queer thing is that it will demonstrate the cases in which both eyes are of equal power to be surprisingly exceptional. I have tried it in a score of mixed gatherings, and never yet without having the experimenter observe some movement of the figures. There was one old lady, I remember up at Port J. Ierson last summer, who persisted in saying that she saw precisely with both eyes as she did with one eye, and well she might, for when I examined her eyes more closely I found she was stone blind on the left side and didn't know it!"

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That's a jolly idea that they have in Berlin, of selling sheet music by the pound. You go to one of the shops where music is sold in this way and give them a list of the pieces you want and they select them out in a pile and weigh them out, so many pounds so many marks and pennings. Or, if you can afford, say three pounds you can take one pound of sentimental one pound of dramatic, twelve ounces of comic, and four ounces of devotional, or any other such arrangement that suits your fancy. It is a great boon to the musician who is poor, not to speak of the poor musician—because under this system Wagner and Brahms and Dvorak will cost him no more than the insignificant and forgotten Smithowski. And Wagner for the piano, of course, being bought by the pound, can be played by the pound with good grace.

Courses in Domestic Science.

Women students in the Chicago university take a course in domestic science. In the first term is considered house sanitation, embracing the subjects of the location, ventilation, heating, draining, plumbing, and proper furnishing of a house. In the second term the study of water, food and clothing from a scientific point come up for attention, the subject of diet is considered, and food adulterations are investigated. The third term is devoted to domestic economy, when students give their attention to the administration of the household.

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