

Musical and Dramatic.

IN MUSICAL CIRCLES.

The anticipated season of opera began last Monday evening with a presentation of "The Mikado" which was repeated on Tuesday. Having just closed a successful season of six weeks in Halifax, hundreds being turned away on the closing night, the company individually and collectively were or ought to be, in a condition to do their best work in this city. The principal roles in "The Mikado" were taken by Miss Florence Gilbert, Miss Ethel Balch, Miss Zahn, Miss K. Power, Mr. James Gilbert, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Callaghan and Mr. Couch. The production was really well staged and in costume, character, and regard to detail second perhaps to no other performance of the opera ever given here. The "three little maids" upon whom depends the responsibility for a good production from the ladies side of the "case," were in the hands of the three ladies I have first named and there is no doubt they speedily secured the favor of the audience. They sang and acted their respective roles well and were exceedingly graceful in their movements.

Miss Florence Gilbert, is an actress of evident talent and sang and acted her role with excellent interpretation and conception of its character. Her voice is true and tuneful, her solos were enthusiastically encored, the work of the piece being stopped so that she might again be heard. "For he is going to marry Yum-Yum" as she gave it with sweet voice and charming grace, made a decided hit.

Miss Balch, who was bright and petite, was "Yum-Yum" and sang her role very consistently. Her voice is of somewhat unusual if not peculiar quality and its compass is of good range. It is a voice that is always heard to better effect, in solo work than it sometimes is in ensemble. There are voices of that kind—I mean the other kind—every company has them so has this company. Miss Balch's solo "The Moon and I," was well given, and merited the praise bestowed on it. Colored calcium lights were thrown on the singer in this scene with very pleasing effect.

The role of Katisha, as interpreted by Miss Power was also well received, musically; but as the lady evidently possesses much physical charm, it was difficult to understand her alleged hideousness. Miss Power did not make up her part consistently.

Mr. Gilbert as Koko was the life of the piece and demonstrated that his reputation as a fun maker was well earned and rested on a secure foundation. He appeared only in Monday evening's performance of the Mikado. The role of Koko on the second night being done by Mr. Dadd, who imitates Mr. Gilbert quite closely.

The principal tenor is Mr. Nelson whose voice I did not always like. It was throaty at times and irregular. At other times he sang quite well but not always in tune. It is not unlike a voice of the other kind. Perhaps however the majority would be pleased with his voice. As an actor it did not strike me this gentleman was remarkable.

The other voices named are good except that Mr. Couch has one of those tremolo voices that weary one so. It is a pity he has contracted the habit.

The Chorus was very good throughout although it occurred to me it was not so powerful as its members would indicate it should have been. There were rough spots in the work it is true but not serious enough to require other remark and generally speaking the baton of the conductor was closely watched by the performers.

Fatinitza, Olivette, The Chimes of Normandy were also given during the week. The engagement closes to-night. The company I know is well liked here and their work approved. The best proof of this is in the fact that business improved nightly. I hope to hear them in this city soon again.

I learn the Opera House management is negotiating for an attraction for Thanksgiving day. They should try and secure a return visit by Mr. Gilbert's company.

TO THE EDITOR OF PROGRESS: Perhaps your musical and dramatic critic, Mr. Editor, may feel that in speaking of the Gilbert Opera Company in the Mikado, he is doing them full justice. I have no doubt of that, but I enjoyed another opera of the week so thoroughly that perhaps you will find space for an additional note. I speak of Fatinitza, Supr'e's military opera that was presented at Wednesday's matinee and evening performances. This is an old opera but new to many people here. The music is catchy and pretty. There are many opportunities for handsome stage grouping and it goes without saying that Mr. Gilbert took every advantage of them.

As the Lieutenant of Circassian cavalry, Miss Florence Gilbert took the leading part and she charmed and delighted the audience by her happy and graceful adaptation of it. Though indisposed at both performances, her part lacked nothing of the vivaciousness and dash necessary to make it perfect. The role is exceedingly onerous and difficult, and the high character

of Miss Gilbert's work speaks volumes for her versatility and ability.

Miss Balch, as the Princess Lydia, was bright and attractive, and did what she had to do with much acceptance.

Much favor and but little fault could be found with the rest of the company, and what imperfections there were, were more amusing than serious. If Mr. Edwards would request a whip rehearsal he would always hear the crack of his lash and Mr. Nelson could not read Michael Strogoff with out gleaming the fact that it is not necessary for a war correspondent to present himself at all times with note book in hand and his pencil in his mouth.

The Living Pictures do not properly come under opera, I know, but as they were presented at the close of the performance a note about them will not be out of place. I was among those who looked forward to their presentation with considerable expectancy and a little apprehension. There was no need of this, however, for never have I seen living pictures presented so handsomely, utterly devoid of the slightest vulgarity and yet so attractive and beautiful. The subjects presented were

- Psyche at the Well Thierman
- Sajpho Spiridon
- Chloe A. M. Vasselot
- Gleaner Jules Bre o
- Spring Miss Florence Gilbert
- Fall Miss Florence Gilbert
- Venus of Milo Louvre
- Psyche and the Euterpe W. Krae
- An admirer of Art J. Goetz
- Music, a study Miss Florence Gilbert

Educative as well as beautiful! I hope that few people who have been interested in this new feature of the stage, will miss such an opportunity to see these living pictures. Mr. Gilbert has a frame for them that is a magnificent piece of work. The background paintings are artistic and beautiful. Those members of the company who pose, represent the subjects as naturally as can be imagined. They do their part well.

Tones and Under-tones.

Katherine MacNeill, of Chicago, assumed the part of Judy Kilduff in "Rory of the Hill" recently in Boston at short notice, and made a hit. Miss MacNeill, who is well known as a contralto, has no thought of matrimony or of permanently abandoning her career as a singer. She is fortunate in being so versatile as to fill positions so dissimilar. Miss MacNeill recently refused an offer to go to the West Indies with an opera company.

At the Melba concert in Music Hall, Boston on the 7th inst. Mme. Melba sang Verdi's "Ah fors e lui," Arditi's waltz song, "Se Saran Rose," in the quartette from "Rigoletto," and in the mad scene from "Lucia di Lammamoor," the latter being given in costume and with scenery. For encores she gave a dainty French song, and Tosti's "Good Bye."

A notice says: "The selections were sufficiently varied and were chosen well. Mme. Melba astonished, as ever, by her easy execution, the purity of her intonation, and the great facility and brilliancy of her colorature work. And behind all this lies that exquisitely limpid quality of voice which allures and satisfies so completely. The waltz song was sung to a nicety, and Tosti's "Good Bye" was never heard with greater expression. Her Lucia, too, was a wonderful interpretation. Surely, although her dramatic work is not of the highest quality, there is no denying her great talent as a vocalist, and the beauty of her voice. She was a pleasure and a delight on Thursday evening, as applause and flowers alike showed."

Mr. H. Plunkett Greene will revisit the United States in January to fulfil a large number of engagements. It is said that he has added a series of new songs to his repertory, and intends to give the public some novelties in the way of programmes.

The Queen has intimated to Sir Augustus Harris her intention of giving her patronage to the season of English opera at Covent Garden, and has taken the royal box.

"The War Time Wedding" a new opera by C. T. Dezey and Oscar Well, was given its first presentation on any stage last week by the Bostonians at the Columbia theatre, San Francisco. They closed their season there with "Robin Hood."

Paderewski will be heard in the Boston Music Hall on the 16 inst. for the first and only time in conjunction with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Miss Marie Braema sailed on 13 inst. from London for the United States. The rest of the Abbey and Grau company have arrived on this side already. Miss Braema will be heard in Boston on 21st inst and the two following days.

TALK OF THE THEATRE.

A very fine portrait of the late Edwin Booth has been recently placed in the lobby of the Opera House in this city. It is said to be the gift of one of the directors of the house and is the handiwork of a young lady of St. John. Apropos of this gift I observe that a number of the theatres in the United States are being ornamented and their attractions added to and increased in a similar manner.

Theatre goes generally will regret that

the illness of Miss Edwina Grey (Mrs. H. Price Webber) continues to the extent that Mr. Webber has been compelled to cancel his dates at the opera house for the holiday season. Miss Grey recently underwent surgical treatment in Boston and her convalescence is more protracted than was anticipated. This lady has visited this city in her professional capacity, annually for some time past and her fidelity to her part and her earnest desire and endeavour to please was always so recognized that she was always the recipient of a cordial reception on her several appearances. All her friends here old and new, will unite in the hope of soon hearing of her complete restoration to good health.

In France dramatists get 12 per cent of the gross receipts of each play and are allowed tickets to the value of 100 francs for every performance of the plays they have made.

Marguerite Tamagno, the daughter of the famous tenor is studying for the theatrical profession and will join Eleanor Duse's company.

Niss Olga Nethersole's tour in America

this season opens in Boston on Monday next when she will be seen in "Dante" until Thursday. For the last half of the week she will be seen as "Camille."

Mrs. D. P. Bowers, the well known actress is dead. The sad event occurred in Washington on the 6th inst., and the cause of death was pneumonia. She was ill only a few days. The maiden name of the deceased was Elizabeth Crocker. She was born in Stamford, Ct. 12th March 1830. Her first appearance on the stage was at the Park theatre N. Y. in the role of Ama'this in a little drama of a domestic character entitled "A Child of Nature." Her success was immediate and she subsequently developed into a tragedienne of high order. She has played in England in the role of Julia in "The Hunchback" and the London Times said of her she was "the best tragedienne America has sent us since Charlotte Cushman." Her versatility was remarkable and her repertoire of tragedy ranged from Julia to Lady Macbeth, embracing also Ristori's Creations of Queen Elizabeth, Mary Stuart and Marie Antoinette. Lady Andley will always be associated with her name.

THAT DIMPLE.

Words and Music by M. STRINDBERG-ELMORE.

Allegretto grazioso.

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Just spend his Four Quarters for a bottle of Burdock Blood Bitters as all sensible people do; because it cures Dyspepsia, Constipation, Biliousness, Sick Headache, Bad Blood, and all Diseases of the Stomach, Liver, Kidneys, Bowels and Blood from a common Pimple to the worst Scrofulous Sore.

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