

Musical and Dramatic

IN MUSICAL CIRCLES.

So much musical effort has been expended during the Christmas season, that an almost enforced rest is necessary, accounts probably for the quiet now reigning in local musical circles. The reaction may be said to have set in, but it will not likely be of a prolonged character. The Oratorio Society rehearsals have been fairly well attended and not a little progress is being made with the work in hand.

Minstrelsy too is in the air and in that direction the members of the City Cornet Band are moving with no little energy. I understand the musical director of the minstrel circle which is to appear later on in the interests of the band and under the auspices of that organization, will be Prof. Rosendale who is the efficient teacher of the band. A meeting is to be held for rehearsal in the band rooms on next Friday evening. The majority, if not all those who took part in last year's minstrel concert, will be in the circle this year again. It was in contemplation, I believe, to put on a good burlesque opera, but whether or no any decision has been arrived at on this point I have not heard. Whatever action may be taken will in all probability result in the giving of an excellent entertainment, as there is much as well as varied talent among the young men who are directly identified with the city cornet band minstrels.

Tones and Undertones.

A correspondent of the Musical Courier writing from Berlin recently, deals with a vocal quartette he had heard. The writer says 'A vocal quartette is not always a thing of beauty. The principal charm lies in the matching and blending of the four voices which must be well matched and suited to each other in timbre as well as force, and above all in absolute purity of intonation.' This is most true and it would be well for local organizers of quartettes to keep this in mind. It ashered to closely the results would be the more satisfactory.

The musical drama, 'Wulftric,' by Reinhold L. Herman, constructed on Wagnerian lines, was an unqualified success on its first production at Cologne. The chief artists, among whom were two American singers Olive Frenestad and Marion Weld, were called before the curtain more than a dozen times, and laurel wreaths were thrown upon the stage in abundance.

Richard Strauss' latest work 'Thus Spake Zarathustra' has achieved a great success at Frankfurt, the author conducted in person. The effect was such that 'the audience remained silent for a few seconds after the end, and then broke out in tempestuous and long lasting applause.'

Mrs. Richard Blackmore, Jr., (Louise Laine) who was in Halifax for a period of three years and soloist of the Orpheus Club in that city and whose fine voice was latter heard in Oratorio in this city, is a native of New York State. Her birth place is Waverly, N. Y.

Another music festival season will be held at Bayreuth during this year (1897), during the months of July and August.

There will be a great musical jubilee held at Lewiston, Maine, during next October. Madame Nordica, who is a native of that state will be the leading soloist and there will be a chorus (all Maine voices) numbering probably one thousand.

Richard Pohl, the musical composer, died at Baden-Baden on the 17th of last month. He was born at Leipzig, September, 12, 1826.

Martinus Sieveking, the pianist, says he practices systematically anywhere from five to seven hours each day and one hour of that time is generally devoted to finger exercises.

Yvette Guilbert who is again singing in New York, is dubbed 'the Duse of the Cafe Chantant.' She is said to be plumper and prettier than when she was in America before.

The new opera 'Dolores' which Madame Patti is studying at Craig-y-nos is by Mr. Andre Polonais, who wrote 'Misika' for her about a year ago. 'Misika' is what is called a pantomime opera. As previously mentioned Madame Patti intends to produce 'Dolores' at Nice, next spring.

Dr. Donald McLeod told a good story in the course of an address to the Glasgow Gaelic Musical Association. One time in the early 40's a cousin of his own, a famous piper, was resident in an Edinburgh hotel, and used to practise regularly on his pipes. He had not long commenced one evening when a visiting card was handed to him, with the request that the owner might be allowed to be present at the performance. The card bore the name of Mendelssohn. For three nights that great composer came and studied while the piper played. Dr. McLeod said he had told that story to a

sarcastic Englishman, who at the finish stated that it was a remarkable fact that Mendelssohn died soon after.

Sir Frank Lockwood never loses an opportunity to be witty. His humor is usually spontaneous, too. One evening he presided over a gathering in Centenary Chapel, York, at which selections from 'Judas Maccaheus' and 'The Messiah' were performed. In the course of an address during the interval Sir Frank reminded his hearers that Handel was intended for the law—for the law knew little of harmony—Handel chose music as his art. In his eulogy of the great composer all will be inclined to agree with Sir Frank. He is not only popular now, he said, but he must have been popular in his own time, for—as it is written—when 'The Messiah' was performed in Dublin so great was the press of company who would assemble to hear it that ladies were requested to go without their hoops; and the honorable and learned gentleman believed they did.

The gown which Mme. Melba will wear in the ball room scene of 'La Traviata' cost nearly \$15 000.

When Rosenthal resumes his tour next month, he will begin on the Pacific coast and come eastward. He has contracted with Henry Wollsohn for a tour in the United States during the season of 1898—99 and also for a later one.

Yvette Guilbert will go on a concert tour this season. In her company will be Miss Amy Harley, soprano, Miss Louise Eagle, contralto, Thos. McQueen, tenor and H. Winnitred Goff baritone.

Sousa intends during his tour to visit 196 cities and give about 280 concerts. To do this, it is said, will involve 21 000 miles of travel. He will probably visit St. John as one of the cities, but if he goes to St. Stephen, Fredericton, Amherst &c., while in Canada he will include several not unimportant towns.

Nordica opened her season at the Court Square theatre, Springfield, Mass. last week. She was supported by Madame Scalchi, Barron Bertold and Mr. Dempsey and Mr. Luckstone as pianists.

The testimonial concert tendered to Col. Mapleson in Boston last week was not a financial success notwithstanding the fact that those participating in the programme were among the most capable in the land. The principal soloists, each of whom scored an immediate triumph, were, Madame Clementine De Vere, Madame Doti, and Madame Scalchi, Signor Randacio and Signor Alberti. There was a chorus of two hundred and fifty voices and a full orchestra conducted by Signor Rotoli.

The Whitney opera company with 'Brian Boru' will be at the Boston theatre on the 11th inst. Miss Amanda Fabris is the prima donna of this company. 'A Bohemian Girl' reproduced at the Castle Square theatre, Boston, last week, was given very satisfactory performances. For this week the opera has been 'The Royal Middy.' This will be followed by 'Maritana.'

Zelie De Lussan will sing the title role in 'Pepita Jimenez' a new opera by the Spanish composer Albem which will shortly be produced in England. Mme. Stella Brazzi, who sometime ago was mentioned in this column has been recently singing with great success at Nice. Her Venus in 'Tannhauser' is highly commended. She is a fine actress with a beautiful voice.

TALK OF THE THEATRE.

The season of the Isham—Lytell Company at the Opera house closed last Monday evening with a performance complimentary to W. H. Lytell. The play given on the occasion was 'My friend from India' a piece which contains many comical situations and promises to be equally a winner with 'The private secretary.' The play possesses indeed many points of resemblance to the 'Secretary.' The beneficiary of Monday evening appears to the best advantage in this piece, though all the honors are not his because Mr. George Mack as 'the friend' and Miss Genie Harlan as the German maid contributed in the most important manner to the success of the performance. In my judgement the role of the German girl, as presented by Miss Harlan has never been equalled on the stage here certainly not surpassed. Other plays produced by the company afforded better opportunity for other members of the company such as 'A midnight bell' to which reference was made last week, and 'Forgiven' in which Miss Francis Drake demonstrated her power in emotional roles. This young lady, who is quite handsome, by the way has evidently been well instructed in her profession and the rumor that she studied at the Comedie Francaise in Paris appears to be abundantly borne out by the

excellence of her work in such opposite impersonations as the school teacher in 'A Midnight Bell' and the wife in 'Forgiven.' Miss Amy Randolph too is another actress of great power and was also popular with the audiences. Mr. Drumier the leading man, created a good impression in his every role and the rest of the company seemed to be well appreciated. The business done however, except on the holidays was comparatively light, despite the ability of the company. The new play 'A Chance for a life' wants the pruning knife judiciously employed; after which there is much probability of it being a success. One thing appears to be necessary in respect to it, viz. that the 'funny' business by Mr. Lytell or whoever else plays that part hereafter, be eliminated. It is incongruous—it mars a scene of serious import in a dialogue between two ladies. It is not reasonable either because a tramp would have no such license on the premises of any one.

Miss Katherine Rober, begins a two week's engagement at the Opera House on Monday evening. This lady was here last year and did a large business.

The Brennan-Westcott Company closed their season in this city last Saturday evening and went to Moncton on Monday. During their stay here they have both had numerous additions to the admirers of their work. 'Tim the Tinker' in which Mr. Brennan has appeared elsewhere many times, was received with much favor by the audiences. The business was quite large during their engagement.

What is designated one of the strongest scenes in 'The Sign of the Cross' (Wilson Barrett's play) now on at the Boston Museum, is thus described by a dramatic critic in that city: Berenis, the rich and beautiful patrician in love with Marcus and who plots to compass Mercia's death in order to win him for herself, is played with much feeling by Miss Alida Cortellyon, fair of face, lissome of figure and graceful of action. Tender, appealing and tigerish in turn, her parting with Marcus and the realization that she has brought desolation upon herself and death upon him she loved is one of the strongest of the play's scenes.

A number of young ladies, graduates of the Smith's College, class of '95, gave a performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in Carnegie Hall, New York, last Monday evening. The house was filled with a most enthusiastic audience. The funds are to provide a new building for their Alma Mater.

Francoise Sarcey, the Paris dramatic critic, has won his suit against Le Petit Journal for summarily dismissing him, obtaining \$80 damages. The dismissal was due to his using very colloquial language in explaining the meaning of 'Kip-kif bourricot' which has lately sprung up in Paris.

Italy has not concerned itself much with Shakespeare, but the taste is growing in that country, and Signor G. Chiarini's 'Studia Shakespeareana' has just appeared in Leghorn. Long ago it was known that Shakespeare was intimately acquainted with Italian writers, and many are the articles which have been written where the characters of the great master have been shown to have been derived from Italian sources. The well-bred Englishman of the Elizabethan era was better acquainted with Italian than is his descendant of the Victorian age.

Genial Tom Wise, and his pleasant wife, Miss Gertrude Whitty, and Malcolm Bradley, as well as Geo. Deyo, who were all here with Harkins last summer are playing in 'The War of Wealth' at the Boston theatre, Boston, this week. The critics speak highly of Wise's work in this piece, and add 'that as a whole the company is as good as the play.'

'Miss Cherryblossom of Tokio' a story of Japanese domestic life, published by the Lippincott last year, is being dramatized.

A new comedy, 'The Brothers Dawson' has just been finished by Dr. Conan Doyle. Miss Ethel Barrymore, daughter of Maurice and the late Georgie Drew Barrymore, is playing in 'Rosemary' and has a good part in the piece.

'Under the Red Robe,' a play made from Stanley J. Weyman's novel, made a big hit when given last week at the Empire theatre New York.

'My Friend From India,' was being given at the Park theatre, Boston, this week by a capable company. It would be difficult to improve on the production of that piece given in this city so recently by the Isham-Lytell company. The author's name is H. A. DuSouchet.

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The fauna of the deep sea—with a few exceptions hitherto only known as fossils—are new and specially modified forms of families and generally inhabiting shallow waters in modern times, and have been driven down to the depths of the ocean by their more powerful rivals in the battle of life, much as the ancient Britons were compelled to withdraw to the barren and inaccessible fastness of Wales. Some of their organs have undergone considerable modification in correspondence to the changed conditions of their new habitats. Thus down to 900 fathoms their eyes have generally become enlarged, to make the best of the faint light which may possibly penetrate there. After 1,000 fathoms these organs are still further enlarged or so greatly reduced that in some species they disappear alto-

gether and are replaced by enormously long feelers. The only light at great depths which would enable large eyes to be of any service is the phosphorescence of deep-sea animals.

We know that at the surface this light is often very powerful, and Sir Wyville Thomson has recorded one occasion on which the sea at night was "a perfect blaze of phosphorescence, so strong that light and shadows were thrown on the sails and it was easy to read the smallest print." It is thought possible by several naturalists that certain portions of the sea bottom may be as brilliantly illuminated by this sort of light as the streets of a European city after sunset. Some deep-sea fish have two parallel rows of small circular phosphorescent organs running along the whole length of their bodies, and as they glide through the dark waters of the profound abysses they must look like model mail ships with rows of shining portholes.

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