

Music and The Drama

IN MUSICAL CIRCLES.

From several sources during the week I have heard of a new singer in our city in the person of a young lady whose voice has been carefully trained and to whom is accorded some prominence among our local vocalists. The lady referred to is Miss Frances Travers; a daughter of Dr. Boyle Travers, of this city, and she was the cause of a musical surprise to the congregation of the Cathedral here, by singing a solo in that church during the afternoon service on last Sunday. Her solo was an "O Salutaris" by Verdi, and unless all reports that have reached me of her rendition of this music be exaggerated, then the city musical is the happier in that the owner of this voice is "native and to the manner born." I have not yet heard the young lady sing myself, but inasmuch as a voice and method so highly spoken of cannot, in the nature of things well be kept from the public, I hope to have the pleasure of hearing her in concert in the near future.

There is nothing else in the local musical world that calls for any special remark this week. Picnics are the almost orthodox recreations these days that, "be summer days."

Tones and Undertones.

Madame Sofia Sedlmair the German prima donna and one of the best Isoldes and Brunnhildes is singing in opera in London, Eng. She is a native of Hanover and studied singing in Vienna and Berlin and is still the leading prima donna in Vienna.

Jean de Reszke, the famous tenor will sing before the Czar at Warsaw on the 9th September next. He has been asked to sing the roles of Tristan and Parsifal in a special Wagner performance which is proposed for next year at Bayreuth. The matter is yet unsettled.

Madame Emma Eames has accepted an invitation from Frau Wagner to sing in the last performance of Parsifal on the 19th inst. The poem "Recession" written in honor of the Queen's Jubilee by Rudyard Kipling has been set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan.

An obelisk adorned with a medallion of Chopin has been erected at Retzert. This is where Chopin gave his first concert.

During the next opera season at Turin, it is decided that an entire Wagner cycle will be given.

Herr Andreas Depple, a tenor from the Vienna Opera house and who has on two occasions visited America, is now singing in London, Eng. He is said to be thirty years of age, a typical Teuton, blue eyed and blond, and a genial pleasant man.

Stavenshagen, the pianist, it is stated, has been appointed musical director of the Munich Opera house.

Madame Marchesi the famous teacher of singing, before her marriage was a concert singer in Frankfurt and her name was Mathilde Graumann. Her husband who is an Italian nobleman—exiled in 1848, is still alive aged seventy-five years. They sang together for two years and then became vocal teachers in various cities of Europe finally establishing themselves in Paris in 1881. Signor Marchesi's name and title are Salvatore Marchesi Cavaliere de Castione, Marchese della Rejita. He sang in concert under the stage name of Signor Castrone.

Max Hirschfeld, the leader of the orchestra in the Castle Square Theatre, Boston, has been engaged for the position of musical director for the Tivoli theatre, San Francisco.

A party of Boston musicians are reported as making things very interesting at Mountain View, Maine.

The comic opera "Priscilla" was recently given at the Casino theatre Newport, for the benefit of the Home for Aged Women. It was a great success and the talent engaged in the production was entirely local.

An opera entitled "Pampa" will shortly be produced in Buenos Ayres. It is the work of a Brazilian composer.

There is a report current to the effect that Maurice Gran has offered Selma \$200,000, for a seven months tour in America in 1898-99.

Mascagni is working on a new three act opera to which the name "An Italian Masquerade" has been given.

Franco Leoni's new opera "Rip Van Winkle" which is to be produced in Her Majesty's theatre London during the first week of September next, will also be given in Milan before the year closes.

Leoncavallo, besides his opera "Roland of Berlin" is said to be working on another opera which he intends to name "Don Marzio"

The first performance in La Scala, Milan, which is the most famous opera house in Italy, took place on Dec. 26, 1778. The boxes are owned by the wealthy families of that city. It is probable this celebrated house will be closed for some time.

Popular music has been defined as "the same thing over again."

The gold medal of the London (Eng.) Philharmonic Society has been awarded to Paderewski and Madame Melba. There is a report that the former returned the medal with the remark that if the donors could not find room to place his name on it, it was valueless so far as he was concerned.

Nineteen musical artists have been knighted by Victoria during her reign. Their names are as follows: Henry Bishop, Jules Benedict, Michael Costa, Sterndale Bennett, W. G. Macfarren, George Elvery, Robert Stewart, John Goss, Herbert Oakeley, George Grove, Arthur Sullivan, Walter Parratt, Joseph Barnby, William G. Cusins, John Stainer, A. C. Mackenzie, Charles Halle, George Martin and John Bridge. The honors were declined by W. T. Best, August Manus and H. Weist.

Brahms left behind him no musical works that have not been published. He destroyed all his unfinished and unprinted compositions to prevent their seeing the light after his death, he having given a permanent form to all of his music that he wished to be perpetuated.

TALK OF THE THEATRE.

During the coming week next Friday evening will have materialized the dramatic performance by Miss Margaret Anglin and her company of clever dramatic people, which is now so generally and with so much pleasure anticipated. The mere mention of the young leading lady's name at the head of a company is a reliable indication of the merit of their performance, for the reason that her name always has been and in all probability in this city at least, will ever be associated with all that is talented and intellectual. Her late father, I believe, was one of the intellectual giants of his time, and the tribute of admiration his abilities then received are as well remembered now as when he was in life and moving among the people of this community. His mantle of talent appears to have fallen upon his daughter, because, although on the stage but comparatively few years, her ability and her cleverness have already given her high rank among the leading ladies of the dramatic profession of the day. Some of her impersonation, such as Ophelia in "Hamlet," have won for her the most spontaneous tributes of praise, particularly in respect to the "mad" scene wherein she has been compared with Modjeska, Terry, Minna Gale and other luminaries and by some critics considered superior to any of them. Miss Anglin who recognizes the great abilities of these ladies makes no such claim herself but the statement has been made and among others by no less capable a judge of talent than the present premier of Canada—Sir Wilfred Laurier. The coming appearance of this highly accomplished and handsome young lady will be her initial in St. John and beyond all doubt she will be greeted with a crowded house.

At the Opera house last Monday evening Rice's Comedians began a fortnight's engagement and made their first appearance in this city. The management selected for the opening play, a sort of farce comedy "All in the Family," the arrangement an adaptation or version of which Mr Rice is credited with. The house was literally crowded on the opening night and if laughter and applause go for anything, then it is a certainty the company scored a hit. There was not a great deal in the play of itself, but it presents many laughable situations and was presented with a smoothness and a promptness that betokened careful rehearsal. The musical specialties offered on Monday evening were, some of them novel, and all good, the vocalists being better than one generally hears in a travelling company. The management gives a change of bill nightly with a matinee on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, and the large business they have done during this week gives fair prospect of equal good business during the coming week. Apropos of this company it is said that the attractive leading lady Miss Miller, is a daughter of the famous Joaquin Miller, the poet of the Sierras.

Gillette's "Secret Service" company will sail from England homeward bound on the 7th. August.

Alida Cortelyou, the handsome American girl who played the role of Berenis in "The Sign of the Cross" will remain in London and reappear in that play when it is revived next month by Wilson Barrett. John Hare, the English actor, is desirous of securing some American plays and Charles Coghlan is writing one which he hopes will suit Mr. Hare.

Walter Whiteside, the young tragedian, will probably add to his repertoire next season "The man in Black" an adaptation of Stanley Wyman's romance.

Camille Cleveland, an actress who is to play the role of Mrs. Best in "The Good Mr. Best" next season, is a California girl and is said also to be a beauty.

Annie Irish, who is to be leading lady for W. H. Crane next season will be seen in a part in "A Virginia Romance" which was written expressly for her. Mr. Crane's tour will begin in San Francisco, California.

Madame Odilon, who is called "the pet of Vienna," is playing a star engagement in Daly's (London) theatre. The name of the piece in which she appears is called "Untreu." Madame Odilon has also played with special success in St. Petersburg. She is described as "a very beautiful woman with winsome and brilliant face, framed in a mass of fair curly hair. Nature has been most kind to her and has endowed her with all the qualities necessary to a great actress."

The play "A hunt for happiness" has been returned to Anita Viranti Chartres by Beerbohm Tree in order that a part may be written in it for him. He desires to appear in it when it is produced at the Haymarket theatre, London, next autumn.

"Friends" by Milton Royle is the play at the Castle Square theatre, Boston, this week. It will be followed by a production of "Jim, the Penman."

Augustin Daly's English Company will open the season on 20th August at New-castle. The tour includes Nottingham, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Glasgow, and in each city the company will stay one week. Ada Rehan is leading lady of the company. They will begin a fortnight's engagement at the Grand theatre Islington (London) on 4th. October, thence going to Liverpool and Manchester where the tour will end on 30th. October.

Mrs. Beerbohm Tree, during January next, it is said will appear in Manchester Eng., in the role of Lady Macbeth.

Julia Arthur's place in Sir Henry Irving's company at the Lyceum theatre in London Eng., has been given to Miss Ida Moleworth.

On 30th. August next, the play "What happened to Jones" will be produced in New Haven Ct., and it will be staged by W. H. Lytell, who has been engaged for the purpose.

Nanette Comstock, who in private life is Mrs. Frank Burbeck, has been engaged as a member of Sol Smith Russell's company for next season.

It is said that Nat Goodwin has signed a contract to appear in London for a season of twelve weeks beginning next June. Goodwin must furnish his own company and his own plays. It is also stipulated as alleged that he will not appear either in "The Rivals" or in "David Garrick."

Mamie Gilroy will play the role of Julie Bon Ton in "The Girl from Paris" company next season. Miss Gilroy has attained much success since she played in this city some years ago.

Justin Adams, who will be remembered for his clever work in "McKenna's flirtations" at the opera house here, last year, is playing at Keith's theatre, Boston, in a one act piece entitled "Pond Lilies." The piece is said to be one of the funniest.

Foreign theatrical stars are the rage in London, Eng., at the present time. Madame Rejane has made an immense hit there in "La Doloureuse."

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Another theatre is to be erected in London. The new house will be built on the north side of Harrow road between Ranglegh and Westbury roads. It will abut on these streets.

A celebrated Italian tragedian named Errnate Yacconi has been engaged for two years by Carl and Theodore Rosenfeld. Under his contract with the Rosenfelds he is to give 320 performances for which he will receive \$100,000, and a certain proportion of the profits after a certain sum is reached. He will furnish his own company.

ABOUT RAT CATCHING.

How a New York Professional Captures the Rodents.

If there is any one in New York entitled to pose as an authority upon matters relating to that comparatively unknown but interesting little animal, the ferret, the person is 'Sure Pop' Isaacsen. Having been engaged for thirty years in the business of rat extermination, Mr. Isaacsen has plenty of opportunity to study the ways of ferrets, for those sharp-eyed, active, snaky little creatures are nothing if not rat exterminators. That is their natural occupation and their chief pleasure in life.

When approached on the subject of ferrets Mr. Isaacsen is very willing to talk, but he impresses the inquirer at the outset with the magnitude of the undertaking. After 'Sure Pop' has explained how far he has raised his profession above that of the ordinary pretender to rat extermination, and how much he has learned about it in thirty years, the seeker after knowledge begins to feel small and ignorant, and to put all his subsequent questions in the most humble possible form.

'It is a profession which you cannot study in a university,' said Mr. Isaacsen, with a deprecatory wave of his hand. 'It requires years of practical experience such as I have given to it. Ferrets are only tools with which we work, but they are most valuable tools, and to put them to the proper use we must understand them thoroughly. I will show you one of our best hunting ferrets; he is past his prime now, but she is still very valuable. Joe, bring the 'Old Lady!'

A powerful good-natured-looking young man, whom Mr. Isaacsen referred to as a 'thoroughly practical rat-catcher,' at once appeared in answer to the call. In his arms reclined 'The Old Lady,' a white ferret, whose snappy little eyes, staring inquisitively about her, seemed to indicate that even at the advanced age of seven years she was still taking an active interest in life. The only particular in which she appeared to differ from two or three younger ferrets near by was in the condition of her coat. This was rough and rather scanty, while the hair of the others was thick, smooth and glistening. 'The Old Lady' was perfectly tame and evidently enjoyed being fondled. Her master stroked her proudly, but the visitor, prejudiced by the undeniable resemblance in form which the ferret bears to the snake family, could not be persuaded to handle the limp, squirming body.

'When the ratcatcher goes to work,' said Sure Pop, he has a good dog with him besides the ferret. But there are places where a dog cannot go, and the ferret, on account of its slender head and flexible body, can squeeze itself in wherever a rat can. So when the rat has run into one hole the ferret is put in after him, and the dog is stationed at the hole which forms the other outlet of the rats domain. The ferret works quickly, and in a moment or two the rat rushes out of the second hole, only to be pounced upon by the waiting dog.'

'But doesn't the ferret ever catch the rat

in the hole? And what happens then? asked the reporter with interest.

Mr. Isaacsen half closed his eyes and then began slowly: 'In Russia, you know, the laws are very strict.' He paused. The reporter stared and made a desperate effort to see the connection and follow the thread of the discourse. It appeared presently, however, that Mr. Isaacsen was merely indulging in one of the similes with which he is fond of ornamenting his conversation.

'Yes, and the punishments of the law are severe,' he continued, 'but before the penalty can be inflicted the criminal must first be caught. That is not always easy. So it is with the ferret and the rat. The latter has the start, and you know the proverb about a stern chase being a long chase. Well—there is the answer to your question. But if the ferret should catch his victim!' (Mr. Isaacsen became dramatic.) 'He seizes the rat by the back of the neck, gives the 'dead bite' until his sharp teeth meet with a crunch in the rodent's spine, and then begins to suck the blood. If sufficient time is given to him, the ferret will eat the entire carcass of the rat, and not leave a particle to distress the soul of the nearest housekeeper.'

While on the subject of rat hunting, it may be said that the ferrets work much more successfully in the night than at any other time, because they are able to see better in the dark. It is advisable to let them have free range of the house a little while before their actual work begins, so that they may familiarize themselves with their surroundings. They hunt downward, and if they are put on one of the upper floors in the evening they will work their way gradually to the cellar during the night, driving the rats ahead of them. Rats are instinctively terrified at the presence of ferrets, which they are able to detect by their acute sense of smell. The ferrets should be kept rather hungry, in order that they may be keener at their hunting. It is seldom that rats will turn upon a ferret unless they are swarming in great numbers and have their plucky little pursuer at an obvious disadvantage. In England ferrets are largely used for rabbit-hunting, but in this country so little attention is paid to that sport that the use of the ferret has never become common.—New York Tribune.

PEARLS AND PEARL SHELLS.

Treasures Taken From the Indian Oceans and Persian Gulf.

In St. Nicholas, Captain H. D. Smith, of the United States Revenue Cutter Service, tells of his experiences, "Hunting for Shells," from the Island of Ceylon to the Dry Tortugas, Captain Smith says:

Pearl-shells are valuable, and fine specimens are hard to obtain. They are found in the Treantotee, Gambler, and Trihal groups of islands. The choicest come from Macassar; these are the white-edged shells, worth \$800 a ton, and from these the finest pearl buttons are manufactured.

The most celebrated pearl-fisheries lie near the coast of Ceylon, the Persian Gulf, and in the waters of Java and Sumatra. The Australian coast in the neighborhood Shank's Bay and at Roebuck Bay furnishes some very large shells, some of them weighing from two to three pounds each. The fisheries of Baja, Gulf of California, are very rich. France controlling the gems procured there. The meat of the pearl-oyster is readily bought by the Chinamen, who dry the leathery little bivalves or seal them up in cans and ship them to their countrymen in San Francisco. The pearl-shells readily sell upon the spot at from \$1.50 to \$5 per pound.

Pearls and tears have for ages been associated, and the magic virtues of the pearls were held in high esteem in early times, as they are to-day with the East Indians.

It is said that Queen Margaret Tudor, consort of James IV. of Scotland, previous to the battle of Flodden Field, had many presentiments of the disastrous issue of that conflict, owing to a dream she had three nights in succession, that jewels and sparkling coronets were suddenly turned into pearls—which the superstitious believed were a sign of coming widowhood and of tears.

Pearls are of various colors, and in India the red pearls were highly prized by the Buddhists, who used them in adorning their temples. Pearls are formed to protect the shell fish. They are due to a secretion of shelly substance around some irritating particle, and their composition is the same as that of mother-of-pearl.

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