

**Music and  
The Drama**

TONES AND UNDERTONES.

Jean de Reszke's friends are loath to believe that he is in any way responsible for the presence of M. de Nevers America and the disagreements which have followed his criticisms of the Maurice Grau Opera Company. M. de Reszke is too much above the necessity of any such championship. His own glorious achievements stand for themselves and are, so far as fame is concerned, a monument more enduring than brass. But his former associates in the company could never be made to believe this. He has for some years been the subject of so much praise from M. de Nevers in the French news paper, of which the latter is occasionally the London correspondent, that after the fashion of artists the other tenors believed that no word of praise could be uttered in favor of them and they looked upon the presence of the great tenor's friend here as a certainty that this process of praise at their expense would be continued this year. It needed only the Boston episode to convince them that their apprehensions were well founded. M. de Nevers' explanation is that he said there were no tenors in the company to be compared to 'Mmes. Calve, Sembrich and Eames' in their sphere. The reporter to whom these opinions were expressed is a Harvard undergraduate and a man of culture and breeding. He appeared before the congregation of tenors in Maurice Grau's private office and repeated what had been said to him. The tenors stared with open eyes, 'and there were some things' he said, 'which were much stronger. I could never have put them into the interview.' Then the reporter looked about him and said that he would not repeat the remark referred to in the presence of M. Dippel. He finally consented, in response to Mr. Grau's urgency, and the remark was translated into French for his benefit. Every other demonstration that had preceded this episode was as nothing compared to the scene that followed. M. Dippel turned white with wrath and nearly fell off his chair. Then he recovered himself and expressed his indignation in much more militant fashion. M. Van Dyck, who has known M. de Nevers for some years, once received an opera from him during the season of opera at Covent Garden, for the writer is also a composer of talent. 'Only the day after the opera was submitted to me,' M. Van Dyck said, 'I read a criticism in a Paris newspaper in which M. de Nevers said that all the other tenors at Covent Garden were, in comparison with Jean de Reszke, mere choristers. Of course I returned the opera to the composer, with the explanation that I knew he would not care to risk the fate of his work by leaving it to a mere chorister.' If the present dispute between M. Saleza and M. de Nevers has any sequel in France, news of it will be received here in due time; but the consequences will doubtless be no more serious than such incidents in the operatic world usually are. M. Saleza's rank in his profession is beyond question. M. de Nevers is known as a man of culture. He has made a name as a writer on musical topics and composed some songs that have met with success. He is an accomplished linguist and speaks and writes in nearly every European language. The Boston reporter was probably too inexperienced to know the important things that should be left unprinted in interviews with operatic celebrities.

Two women connected conspicuously with the Maurice Grau Opera Company met in a Western city. One of them had just arrived from Europe and the other had missed no trying detail of the long journey through the country. It was the latter's good health that astonished her friend. "How" she asked, "have you ever been able to live through so much travel?"



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so many changes of temperature and such hard work without breaking down in health or voice?" The other one gave her a very remarkable explanation of the means by which she kept in condition. "One day, she said, "we sang in a western city and the weather was the coldest of the year. The day after we went to a place only a few hours' ride away, but it had grown so much warmer during the night that the weather was summery, I felt certain that I was going to be ill and was on the point of declining then to sing, but I concluded to wait until the next morning, went to my room and my maid drew such a hot bath that I could scarcely put my hand in it, but soon found that I was able to get into the tub by taking the process very slowly. The next day I was well of the impending cold and decided that I would repeat the experiment as a precautionary measure. From that time on I never missed a day. Temperature varied in the different places, but I made it a rule to spend at least half an hour every day in a temperature that did no change, because I had the water tested by a thermometer before I got into it and saw that it was always the same. To that ample device I attribute my keeping in such good health and totally escaping the colds some of the others had."

Adelina Patti is spending the winter in London on account of her husband's health. Baron Cedarstrom is ill and requires the services of London physicians. Mme. Patti was said to be in remarkable voice at her last London concert, and she is in excellent health. Marie Tempest declares that she is finished forever with comic opera and will sing this spring in Covent Garden. Mme. Melba has sung in 'Lucia di Lemmermoor' and 'La Traviata,' in Berlin. Her singing of the cadenza in the mad scene was highly praised. Both she and Signor Andrade, who appeared with her, were called afterward to the box of the Emperor and Empress. Signor Andrade is a great favorite in Berlin and the emperor commanded a performance of 'Don Giovanni,' in order that his wife might see the Italian singer in that opera. Mme. Melba is to give a series of concerts in Russia and will also sing at Monte Carlo later in the season.

**TALK OF THE THEATRE.**

A warm greeting was extended to the Valentine Stock company when it began its engagement at the Opera house on Christmas day. The audience which assembled in the afternoon and evening filled the house to the doors and at the night performance of Young Mrs. Winthrop, standing room could hardly be obtained by late comers. The company made a most favorable impression upon its first appearance and the principals have established themselves strongly in favor of St. John's most critical theatre goers. Mr. Edward Mawson is the capable leading man and he does his work artistically and conscientiously. Mr. Charles Fleming, a son of May Agnes Fleming the novelist, is a prominent member of the organization and his work in All The Comforts of Home has been warmly commended. Miss Jessie Bonstelle, Misses Kate and Anne Blanche are not only actresses of exceptional talent and ability, but are personally attractive and have already won a warm place in public esteem. They have some beautiful gowns and know how to wear them. The company has several other clever people and the performances throughout the week have demonstrated that in the Valentine Stock Company the Opera house management have secured an attraction of unusual merit and one that cannot fail to please in every way. All The Comforts of Home, Young Mrs. Winthrop and A Scrap of Paper were the bills for the week. At the matinee this afternoon Young Mrs. Winthrop will be given.

The Fiske Jubilee Singers will give a sacred concert at the Opera house on Sunday evening, January 7.

Joseph Jefferson has gone to Florida to spend the winter there.

Israel Zangwill's forthcoming novel, 'The Mantle of Elijah,' will be dramatized for production by Liebler & Company.

Marie Burroughs' wedding to Dr. Albert E. Sternie of Indianapolis has been postponed indefinitely because of her serious illness.

Fanchon Thompson, now in Paris, is engaged to be married to the Count de Dion, well known in French society, politics and sport.

Mrs. George Gould (Edith Kingdon) will appear with amateurs in theatricals, during the Christmas holidays, at Mr. Gould's Lakewood estate, Georgian Court.

The betrothal of Charles Richman to Jane Gray of Troy, N. Y., has been announced. There is also a current rumor that Mr. Richman may star next season.

Isa Bowman, the original Alice in the stage arrangement of Lewis Carroll's

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'Alice in Wonderland,' will soon publish reminiscences of the late Mr. Carroll.

Fanny Rice's new play will be called A Wonderful Woman. George Marion will stage the production.

In De Wolf Hopper's forthcoming revival of The Charlatan, under the title of The Mystic Miss, at the Comedy Theatre, London, Jessie Mackaye will have the role of Katrinka, in which she made her debut in comic opera, and scored a decided hit at the Fifth Avenue Theatre last spring.

Pezzana, Duse's first teacher, is retiring from the stage. She may, however, yet visit America. But she will no more be seen on the Italian stage. She was the first Italian actress to introduce natural acting and diction in Italy. In character she was, and still is, proud and of a solitary nature. She never sought applause nor admiration, though few artists have been so much admired as she was. Then she would take a sudden dislike for the stage, and would go and hide herself in some obscure corner of Sicily, and would perhaps return after a couple of years spent in seclusion. And now she has said good-by to the stage for good, but she has not said good-by to the art. No, she is now visiting all the chief towns in Italy, reciting selections from Dante and Homer.

Correspondence from Italy to the Mirror says:

'A French Hamlet always runs the risk of being ridiculous. A female French Hamlet is necessarily ridiculous.' So says a well-known critic, and he is right, as every one must acknowledge who has seen Bernhardt in the part, which she travesties and nothing more. In Italy, where she is usually considered a goddess of her art, her Hamlet is a dismal failure, and an almost empty house is the result whenever it is announced. Even her reading of the part is most monotonous and the whole performance lacks unity of style. All she cares for is scenic effect. The philosophic character of the part she totally ignores. Some of the scenes, indeed, are more fit for the vaudeville stage than for a serious stage. As represented by Bernhardt, Hamlet becomes a mere blaze of modern society. The public, in fact, were so disgusted—for Italians understand and adore Shakespeare—that they left the theatre before the end of the performance, not being able to sit out any more of it. 'Why not play Falstaff at once,' cried some, 'and Don Giovanni?'

Bernhardt is not the first female Hamlet they have had in Italy, and not one has been successful. The best female Hamlet, so far, has been Pezzana, but even she is not so successful as male Hamlets. Italian, do not like to see women in men's roles, although they are accustomed to see women sing and act young men in operas; contralto voices being usually assigned to such roles, as in Faust and Lucrezia Borgia. Anyhow, Italy won't have a Bernhardt Hamlet, and the sooner she casts it from her Italian programme the better for her treasury.

Rejane is very successful, on the other hand, especially in Zaza to which she gives quite a different reading from other actresses we have seen in the part. Rejane is not pretty, but she is what Italians call simpatica, and what the French call troublante. Then she dresses well, according to the part and its progress from low to high Parisian life.

Says the Dramatic Mirror of recent date regarding the duty on theatrical printing. "This week The Mirror prints another interesting communication on the

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subject of Canadian duty on American theatrical printing from one who understands the situation.

"The Mirror recently, using as a text a complaint about the scarcity of first-class dramatic attractions in the minor cities of Canada, explained the reason why American managers of good companies are averse to playing any but the leading cities of Canada. The oppressive an inadequate duty on printing keeps out of the Dominion many attractions that would play the intermediate cities to the own profit and the profit of local managers if the objectionable duty were abolished, or even if it were reasonably modified. Following the article in The Monitor, a Montreal manager urged an objection to it on the score that it did not apply legitimately to that city, where first-class attractions play to profit without reference to the tax. This objection was not well founded, as the article in The Monitor assumed that Montreal and Toronto, at least, were profitable points in spite of the duty on Printing.

"It would be hardly pertinent for managers of theatres in the two or three large cities of Canada that are visited by many American companies to ignore a condition which although it may not seriously affect their individual businesses, is at once a reproach to Canada and highly injurious to the theatres in the larger number of its cities. On the contrary the managers of theatres in the smaller cities, with a view to concerted action to secure legislative relief from an obnoxious law which apparently has no local justification, although it may have been enacted as a protective measure. Certainly the repeal of the law or its equitable modification would result in benefit to the managers even in the principal cities.

"In the communication published in The Mirror this week it is stated that the tax has no defenders even among the Canadian printers, for whose benefit it ostensibly is levied. One of the largest of these local printers himself has been to Ottawa on two occasions, and argued for the repeal of the law, which exacts a duty of 15 cents per pound on lithographic paper, where there is practically no lithographic printing done in Canada, and thus no "infant industry" is nurtured by the tax. It would be sufficient to levy a reasonable tax on type work, which can be executed as well, and as cheaply, perhaps, in Canada as elsewhere. Travelling managers could not object to such a tax, while their complaint as to lithographic work is fully justified, and the tax levied upon it reacts upon the theatre managers and public of Canada, while it in no way benefits local printers.

**A Wise Precaution.**

Husband: 'My dear, I want to ask you one favor before you go off on that long visit.'

Wife: 'A thousand, my love. What is it?'

Husband: 'Don't try to put the house in order before you leave.'

Wife: 'It isn't hard work.'

Husband: 'Perhaps not; but think of the expense of telegraphing to you every time I want to find anything.'

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