Gossip About Plays, Players and Playhouses

CHRISTMAS week at the Omaha playhouses present the light and substantial stuff that is so appropriate to the season. It would be most incongruous and inappropriate to offer solid meat at a time when all are partaking of the relaxation that accompanies the closing week of the year. "It's a might fine thing," said a son of Erin once, "that sundown comes at the close of the day, when a man is tired out and couldn't work any longer, anyhow." So it is with Christmas. It is at the end of a year of strenuous activity, and people are ready for a bit of rest and frolic. This may take on any of a wide variety of forms, but it certainly will not be serious. Managers of theaters long ago learned not to undertake any serious production at the gladsome holiday season. Farce and music is what is wanted, and it getting so that even a moderate dose of that will suffice.

It is hardly expected that of the members of a stock company whose bill is changed each week, and who give eleven performances of each bill, that they should present any deep or elaborate study of a character in enacting the role assumed. It is thefore the more creditable to Harry Long, director of the Woodward Stock company at the Burwood, that he succeeded so well with Napoleon in "Madame Sans Gene" during the week. He was assisted to a greater extent in his performance by the fact that he has been a student of French history, especially during the Napoleonic period, and that the character of the little emperor appeals to him with great force. Be that as it may, Mr. Long achieved the real triumph of the week by his presentation of the picture of Napoleon at home. In appearance it conformed closely to the pictures that have preserved the outward and visible evidences of imperial greatness to us, while in manner it must have been very close to the original. The two closing acts of the play are dominated by the personality of Napoleon, and Mr. Long took the lead and fairly held it all the way. His changes of mood, his abrupt silence and equally abrupt speeches, his nervousness and his rage, were all parts of a compelling conception of a vital character, and proved again what has been frequently said, that Mr. Long has histrionic power of great force and capacity. Taken in conection with the worry and work incidental to preparing so elaborate a production his assumption of the character of Napoleon was a big undertaking and his performance a real triumph.

In the New York Sun of last Sunday John Corbin discusses the William Vaughan Moody play, "The Great Divide," which has interested New York as no other drama of recent years has done. Mr. Corbin says:

It is only in a recondite sense that "The Great Divide" can be called a mystery play; but there is no escape from the mystery that hangs about its audiences. After a lukewarm reception on the occasion of its first production in Chicago it was damned on the road as dull and rawly obscene from Dan to Beersheba, including Pittsburg, Washington and way stations. It is said that Mr. Miller and Miss Anglin were thinking hard of its successor when they opened in their little playhouse on Broadway. But the theatrical scribes of this philistine metropolis, who, when occasion prompts, are tot homines, pronounced it in one voice the rarest of all works of art, a really great drama. In its own case the great divide is apparently the North river.

But there is a no less marked divide within this great divide. According to the verdicts of its audiences it is the most praiseworthy play of the season, and also the most to be condemned. Of every two who see it, at a rough estimate, two share the opinion of Pittsburg. And the carpers here and on the road are by no means all from the intellectual hinterland. Meantime the Princess theater is nightly crowded to the verge of the fire laws. On a raw and rainy Monday night, in the week before Christmas, when theatrical paper is an obsolete security, there was not more than a single row of empty seats. Of applause there was almost none—scarcely excuse enough for a couple of perfunctory curtains. But while the action was in progress the audience was tense with an excitement such as only the most absorbing drama can produce. This is a mystery, the heart of which will not easily be plucked out.

The voice from the Hinterland puts the easiest riddle. No sphinx could take out honest life insurance whose existence depended on keeping it a secret that the high-minded American public denies the existence of such things as brutal drunkenness and intended rape on this pinkly proper earth beneath yon sky of baby blue. There should be nothing in a play, acording to the best beloved of those dear old immigrants rules of thumb, to which lad can't take his sweetheart, a man his wife. Note the rare blend of thrift and morality. Note also the assumption that all sweethearts are imbeciles and all wives are prudes. Against a union of cursing and sentimentality, as Schiller neglected to sing, the gods themselves contend in vain. A large part of the people who abominate "The Great Divide" are those who have been encouraged in the playhouse to be imbeciles, prudes and the natural protectors of such. A theatrical reporter was lately asked that dear familiar question, "What is the best play in town?" When he answered according to his convictions his interlocutor replied: "I don't like the subject. In such matters I follow William Winter." It was useless to retort that Mr. Winter himself in this case has weathered his seasonable discontent and found "The Great Divide" of might.

The one thing the conventional playgoer may be relied on to resent in the playhouse is new truth, and especially when the truth is—as all truth should be—naked. Another of the managerial sayings is that folks like those plays most which show them themselves. But not their true selves. What they delight in is themselves well draped in beautiful garments and illumined by the endearing aura of the limelight. The history of the stage for 2,500 years is replete with examples.

Sometimes the objects of popular abominations are grotesquely trivial. For decades, almost centuries, no French playwright dared to put a bed on the stage of the Theater Francais, even the most decorous and conjugal four-poster. When the innovation was made it called forth a storm of prudish protest. Less than a decade ago a similar outcry was raised here at Clyde Fitch's realistic bedroom scene in "The Girl and the Judge." Today the difficulty is to keep playerfolk from putting in beds where they don't belong. When Mr. Belasco writes a play with a "great" scene centering in a mattress it is a case to be chronicled. Mr. Sothern and Miss Marlowe represent the bridal chamber of Romeo and Juliet in unflinching detail, though nothing is clearer to any student of Elizabethan stage management than that Shakespeare never contemplated any such disillusioning actuality. And now the bridal bed of Romeo and Juliet has made its way into grand opera.

If there is nothing quite as revolting to the popular idea of seemliness as naked new truth, there is nothing as dear to it when it has once become accustomed. In this fact no doubt lies a part of the appeal of "The Great Divide," for, though it is applauded timidly, or not at all, it stirs the audience deeply, and is provocative of precisely the kind of discussion which makes their friends eager to see it. It is only after a preliminary shock and squirm that a touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

Coming Events.

"In the Bishop's Carriage," the dramatization of Miriam Michelson's novel of the same name, is one of the great hits and distinct dramatic sensations of the present theatrical season. The play has created more comment than any play produced in recent years. Its presentation at the Boyd theater on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evenings, with a special matinee on Tuesday, has aroused interest among local theater-goers. The play differs from the book in many important respects. The first act shows the home of the Ramsays, where the bishop brings Nance Olden, the thief, under the impression that she is a college student temporarily out of her mind. Latimer meets the girl, and, though he divines her true character, grows interested in her. In the second act, which occurs in Latimer's rooms, this interest has ripened into love. With Tom Dorgan, her guide in dishonesty, Nance attempts to rob her new-found friend. Latimer catches them, and sends Dorgan to prison in order to fres Nance of his influence. In the third act he proposes marriage to Nance, now turned vaudeville performer, and she refuses him because she believes that she still cares for Dorgan. One look at Dorgan, when, having escaped from prison, he confronts her, disposes of this idea. She refuses to go away with him. Dorgan, to be revenged, tells Latimer that Nance is not what she should be. The fourth act clears up this matter and ends with the union of Latimer and Nance. Miss Jessie Busley, well known in many important plays, interprets the role of Nance Olden, and the many encomiums she has been accorded by critics and public speak in generous terms of the marvelous ability of this rising actress.

In Reginald De Koven and Charles Klein's comic opera, "Red Feather," which comes to the Boyd theater on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, Miss Cheridah Simpson, the prima donna, has been surrounded by a thoroughly adequate supporting company of seventy people, Manager Gaites gave most careful consideration to the vocal abilities of all whom he selected for the organization and prides himself upon having secured one of the best singing companies that has been sent on tour since the days of the Alice Neilson Opera company. The wealth of the scenic and costumic production is well known.

George Primrose and his big minstrel company will be the attraction at the Boyd theater Friday and Saturday evenings and a matinee on Saturday. On the roster of talent supporting Mr. Primrose are the Gorman brothers, Emile Subers, James Conners and Eddie Horan, comedians; Ed Chappell, interlocutor; Clarence Marks, Charles Reinhart, David Irwin, Walter S. Brower, William Oakland, Edgar Allyn, Frank Dunn and Richard Reid, vocalists. There is also an operatic orchestra of twenty musicians, under the conductorship of Charles Prokop. Novel features and new ideas will be a feature of this season's program. In the first part will be sung some of the favorite ballads of a generation ago, such as "Nellie Was a Lady," "Hard Times Come Again No More," "Sweet Nellie Gray," and "Love Among the Roses," after which minstrelsy of today will be given, with the entire company in evening dress and black face, when all the latest ballads and comic songs will be given. A laughing musical sketch will open the second part, to be followed by Mr. Primrose and his "bunch" of cotton blossom coons in a melange of dances.

Miss Constance Adams fairly won her way at the Burwood theater in her introductory role of Madame Sans-Gene. She has shown that in addition to her qualifications as a comedienne she is also endowed with a capacity for more serious work. During the coming week she will be given a chance to show in a different way her talent as a comedy leader. In the character of Mistress Woffington in "Pretty Peggy" she will have the best sort of a chance. Pretty Peggy Woffington has been made the heroine of many a play, but of none more interesting or amusing than this one. In it she has not only her own romance to look after, but that of a younger sister as well. The theater comes in for its share of the action, and a number of lords and women are introduced, as well as the young sprigs about town of the day. Miss Isadore Martin will get a fine chance as the sister of Peggy Woffington, and the others in the company will have plenty of chance. The stage settings permit of considerable display, and this Director Long has provided for with his usual good taste. "Pretty Peggy" will be played first at a matinee on Sunday, and on each evening during the week, with other matinees on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. The regular holiday arrangements will be made for New Year's afternoon.

Hal Reid's melodrama, "Custer's Last Fight," will be the attraction at the Krug theater for two nights commencing matinee today. The company numbers forty people. This includes a band of full-blooded Indians with their war ponies. The cowboys, horses, dogs and wolves used in the production have been loaned by "Pawnee Bill" (Colonel Gordon W. Lillie.) One of the greatest scenes ever placed before the public is the climax to the play—"Custer's Last Stand" against the Indians on the Little Big Horn. This is a faithful stage picture of that gallant though foolhardy attempt to crush the redmen in which the brave general and his command lost their lives. Every child knows the story of the brave Custer.

The attraction at the Krug theater for two nights and two matinees starting New Year's matinee will be that rollicking musical comedy, "Everybody Works But Father." There is a large and well dressed chorus and an evenly balanced cast and the scenic and electrical effects are said to be the best that can be obtained. The music is that catchy kind and all of the numerous specialties are good. There will be the usual matinee on Wednesday.

"Lost in New York" comes to the Krug next Thursday, Friday and Saturday. It is a mirror of high and low life in a great city, told in such a manner as to bring out all the pathetic as well as bright sides of human life. It is not grewsome at any time, and yet it is perfectly true to the subject it purposes to illustrate. There is not a situation that is not taken from actual life, and they are not only original, but at the same time so intense as to win the ardent commendation of playgoers. The lines of the drama are simple and bright and are beautifully rhetorical. The scenery is very striking in appearance.

For today, matinee and night, and for the ensuing week another excellent holiday bill is promised at the Orpheum. It will be the New Year attraction at a special matinee on Tuesday besides the evening. The six Glinserettis, billed as the most marvelous of all acrobats, head the list, hence something especially good in the line of sensation acrobatics should be forthcoming from them. Frederic Hawley and company will present their latest success, a one-act melodrama entitled "The Bandit," about the best vehicle Mr. Hawley has found in the condensed drama. Augusta Glose with her "spoken songs" made a "hit" here two years ago. She is a pretty and charming girl. Misses Alice Hanson and Gussie Nelson have also come before and met favor. Their specialities are comedy, singing and dancing, in the latter of which they excel. Maddox and Melvin will help along the fun-making in a skit called "The Messenger Boy and the Actress." Max Millian will appeal seriously to the music lover. The young violin virtuoso, who is a pupil of Joachim, is reported decidedly clever. Chris Smith and the two Johnsons in a musical comedy skit called "Astorbilt's Home," and the new kinodrome pictures complete a two-hour entertainment calculated to make the week a pleasant one.

Gossip from Stageland.

On February 26 next "Brown of Harvard" will have been played continuously for one solid year, not having closed for a single night during the summer.

Gillette's play built on the Doyle detective stories, "Sherlock Holmes," is scheduled for an early production by the Forepaugh Stock company.

Martin Harvey, the English actor, is preparing an elaborate revival of Shakespeare's "Richard III." to be given in London within the next fortnight.

Paula Edwardes will be the principal figure in the new musical comedy, "The Princess Beggar," which is to follow the "Blue Moon" at the Casino in New York.

Raymond Hitchcock, who has been starring this season in Richard Harding Davis' comedy, "The Galloper," has expressed his intention of returning to light opera next season.

Virginia Harned is writing a classic society drama, which she contemplates producing next fall. One of the characters is supposed to represent a well-known Cincinnati "exclusive."

Robert Ganthony, the playwright and author of "A Message from Mars," has just come to this country for a visit of several months. He is engaged on a new play which he expects to finish while here.

Florence Roberts will present the English version of the Spanish playwright Angel Guinera's new play, "Maria Rosa," at Seattle, Wash., on next Saturday. The play has never been done in English before.

Burr McIntosh has just completed the libretto of a new farce comic opera, entitled, "The Photographer," to which A. Baldwin Sloane has written the music. An early production of the piece is being arranged for.

"Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" is to be produced in London next spring. It has been calculated that this play has been one of the biggest money makers Liebler & Co. have ever put out. It has already netted them $200,000.

Frances Starr, who is playing Juanita at the Belasco theater, New York, in Belasco's exquisite production of "The Rose of the Rancho," made her first appearance with a small summer stock company, at Albany, N. Y., in June, 1901.

The present tour of Olga Nethersole in America will cover 26,000 miles. It is the intention of the actress to preserve her diary and later publish her impressions in book form under the title, "Twenty-six Thousand Miles on Wheels."

Robert Browning's play, "Colombe's Birthday," was given a matinee performance in New York last week at the Hudson theater, with Grace Elliston in the role. It is pronounced to be one of Browning's most satisfactory dramas.

Isabel Irving is to be starred by Liebler & Co. She is to go out on the road in "Susan in Search of a Husband," recently played by Eleanor Robson in New York. It is a comedy by Jerome K. Jerome. Miss Irving was a member of the original cast.

It is being arranged to give several performances of Hauptmann's "Hannele" during Lent in New York. The play is regarded as particularly appropriate for that season of the year, and a series of special morning performances will also be given for children.

Eleanor Robson, according to present plans, will again stay in New York during the whole of next season, appearing in a number of new plays at the Liberty. Following the plan she has been pursuing this season. A new play by Rostand, the French poet, will be given an early production by her.

Grace George has closed her successful engagement in New York in "Clothes," and has begun her tour of the principal cities. Upon her return to the metropolis early in April she intends to appear in a special production of Ibsen's "The Lady From the Sea" and as Cyprienne in Sardou's "Divorcons."

Mme. Rejane, the French actress, has opened her own theater in Paris. It is located on the Rue Blanche on the site of the former Nouveau theater. Her opening play was "La Savelli," a play in seven scenes by Max Maurey. The house was thronged with notable persons and the actress was given a cordial reception. "La Savelli" is rather an ensemble of striking scenes than a play. The action is somewhat uncertain. La Savelli is a street singer, whom Prince Carpania seeks out and marries. She is revengeful against the empire, and the prince conspires for her sake to draw the emperor into a trap at his own house, where he is assaulted by a member of the Carbonari, but escapes.

M. Antoine, the new director of the Odeon in Paris, has created a furore in the French capital with his revival of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar," which has just been unfolded to the admirers of the English dramatist in that city. The opening date was six weeks after the one originally set. M. Antoine has given the play a scenic investiture which has made stage managers wonder, and it is now freely stated that he is the logical candidate for the direction of the Comedie Francaise, the foremost position that can come to any theatrical manager in France. One of the greatest successes achieved in this triumph was scored by Eduard Alexander de Mark, whom American audiences will remember as the leading man with Sarah Bernhardt during her tour of this country last year. M. de Marx played Marc Antony. In the famous forum scene a mob of 400 was employed with overwhelming effect. All Paris has been set talking about the production, and the vogue of Shakespeare in the French capital has been established.

Widensall in St. Retersburg

(Continued from Page One.)

lectures to the membership on the same, that would in time take the place of the present manner of work and be rightly classed with true association work in all other lands.

I met in this building Baron Paul Nicolay, a graduate of St. Petersburg university, who is intensely interested in association Christian work for the students in this university. I had a personal interview with him alone in the Light House building and afterwards by appointment, and with other university students in my room at the hotel. It was most gratifying to meet such a representative of such a university ardently desirous to do a safe, yet vigorous evangelical work in the name of Jesus Christ among the university students.

In company with Mr. Gaylord I met with some of the representative men connected with his work in St. Petersburg; among the rest was a noted instructor, General Peter Sideroff, at the head of one of the first government schools in St. Petersburg. He is a very good man, so Mr. Gaylord tells me, intensely interested in his work of education and very helpful to Mr. Gaylord in his work for young men. He received us very cordially and gave to us much of his valuable time. He read many of my letters from other countries and expressed his hearty appreciation of them.

I met with the secretaries of the Evangelical association and through an interpreter, a young banker, spoke to them of the association work, its far-stretching influence and especially of the importance of the secretary's work in all association effort. They seemed highly pleased with all I had to say. The man who is now General Secretary, Mr. Waldemar Kranel, is a very spiritual man. Having means of his own he gives his time and services almost gratuitously to the association work.

On Wednesday, September 19, the last evening I spent in St. Petersburg, I attended a meeting of the representatives of the St. Petersburg Young Men's Christian association appointed to meet me, a fine body of Christian men. Among them was Pastor Herru Findeisen, member for Russia of the World's committee Young Men's Christian association and chairman of the Russian National Association committee, as well as president of the local association. He is a most efficient and devoted Christian man. The meeting gave me a most attentive hearing to all I had to say and asked a number of important questions. This association is purely evangelical, made up mostly of Germans, Lutherans and reformed, at a ratio of one reformer to eight Lutherans, but all under the greater designation evangelical.

This evangelical association is on the right basis and can be made to do a safe and great work in St. Petersburg and Russia. It is constituted of representatives of the only real reliable body of evangelical Christians in that city that is large and permanent enough to inaugurate and maintain a true association work. But like all others, it needs outside encouragement and help at first from the countries where the association work is strong. But while it should receive encouragement and assistance from all countries where the association is well developed, it should especially receive the more immediate help of the German associations, or at least through German representatives, who would understand the present working constituency more than any others and as a matter of course could more intelligently and wisely direct them in the purpose and methods of true association effort. Besides, the Russian young men are for various reasons not as capable at present as the German young men to maintain a true Young Men's Christian association work in St. Petersburg.

I was intensely interested in all the association work I saw in St. Petersburg. Russia, and would have been glad to have spent a much longer time in that city to help inaugurate a far-reaching association work for its young men and eventually for the young men of the entire Russian empire.

The field for Young Men's Christian association work in Russia is large and inviting. The apparent difficulties must not be allowed to prevent the inauguration of the best and truest work. True association work will win in Russia as in other lands, if rightly started and rightly maintained, while every other work, however promising at first, will eventually fail because it cannot and will not have the help of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

ROBERT WEIDENSALL.

Paris, France, Dec. 10, 1906.

Timber for Wine Casks

"The growing scarcity of timber suitable for the manufacture of staves is a problem that confronts two continents and in which all the wine drinking world, and therefore the civilized world, is concerned," said I. B. Goldman, a stave grower and shipper of Hope, Ark.

"Timber best suited for manufacture into staves comes from Arkansas and small portions of Louisiana, Texas, Alabama and Tennessee. The timber has been cut in large amounts every years to meet the growing demand. Prices have advanced, of course, but the demand still advances, for no other wood can take the place of that produced in our section.

"Most of the staves are shipped to Barcelona, Spain, where they are used in the manufacture of wine casks. Both Europeans and Americans have tried to invent something to take the place of the stave, but so far without success. Glass and earthen casks have been tried, but wine does not age the same in these receptacles and it has quite a different flavor."—Washington Post.

A Decline in 'Frisco

With hope in his heart the man faced the woman at the door.

"Are you the person who advertised the loss of a $50,000 pearl necklace?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," the lady eagerly cried. "Have you found it?"

"Here it is, ma'am." And he handed her the jewels.

"Thank you so much," said the lady. "Here is $5 for your trouble."

The man's face fell.

"Five dollars!" he hoarsely growled

"You are disappointed," said the lady. "Well, I'll tell you what I'll do. If you will give me $5 you can keep the necklace."

Then the unfortunate man realized that the pearls were paste.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Music and Musical Notes

THE outlook in a musical way just now is rather meager, so far as foreign attractions are concerned. Locally there are several plans in progress. The next meeting of the ... department of the Woman's club will come on the afternoon of January 3, with the following program, which reads attractively:

Concerto ..... Mozart
Two Pianos—Mr. Sigsmund Landsburg, Mr. E. C. Patton.
Souvenir de Moscou (airs Russes) ..... Wieniawski
Miss Emily Cleve.
a. Until You Came ..... John W. Metcalf
b. Violet ..... Albert Mildenberg
Mrs. C. C. Cope.
Song Without Words ..... Sinding
Miss Gertrude Ernst.
Sunset ..... Dudley Buck
Mrs. A. I. Root.
Robert Toi Que J'aime ..... Meyerbeer
Mr. Olaf Pederson.
Impromptu ..... Shubert
Mr. E. C. Patton.
Miss Ingrid Pedersen, accompanist.

The people taking part are all professionals. Miss Ernst is one of the instructors at the Chicago university. Mrs. Shary has charge of the recital and has evidently spent much time and pains upon its make-up.

Mrs. Esther Palmquist, who has been studying vocal and operatic art with Hermann Devries and L. A. Phelps in Chicago, is spending the holidays with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Mullin, in this city, and will give a song recital at Schmoller & Mueller's auditorium next Thursday evening, January 3. She will be assisted by Miss May Lovely, a pianist well known in Omaha, and Mr. Vail. Mrs. Palmquist, whose voice is dramatic soprano, will sing the aria from Weber's "Der Treischutz." The program also includes the Habenera from "Carmen, Gounod's "Serenade," with flute obligata; Tosti's "Good Bye" and "Love in the Spring Time" by Arditi. Miss Lovely's numbers are "Valse Styrienne," by Wollenhaupt, and Wagner's "Song to the Evening Star." Mrs. Palmquist leaves the last of the week for Chicago, where she will continue her studies until next October, when she will tour with a concert company.

On January 10 at the Schmoller & Mueller hall Stanislav Letofsky, pupil of Mr. Jean Duffield, will give a piano recital.

The next meeting of the Tuesday Morning Musical club comes January 8, at the residence of Mrs. E. W. Nash. The great Italian composers will be represented. Mrs. Turner has charge of the program.

"The Holy City" was given successfully in Bellevue December 20, under the direction of Miss Fawcett. Many people went down from Omaha. A good audience filled the Presbyterian church. Of the soloists Mrs. Wilhelm, who sang the soprano role particularly acquitted herself with credit.

At the Presbyterian church in Omaha last Sunday night Mr. Ellis and his choir gave a large part of "The Holy City."

The day before the Christmas music services at the St. Mary's Avenue Congregational church, Mrs. Kelly received word that her brother had been killed in an accident. Notwithstanding this sad news, she went through her part in the Sunday singing both morning and evening. Those who knew her well noticed the set expression of her face. Not till after her day's work was over did she tell even her choir companions of her sorrow and loss. Mrs. Kelly has the sympathy and affection of a large circle of friends.

The following comment by W. J. Henderson is almost too full of good hard sense to be popular. If singers took his advice to heart there would be at least a few more first rate opera and concert performers.

From time to time it may be convenient and possibly profitable to make some comment in this place on the new opera singers who have been brought before us this season. Some have come trailing long and flaming European reputations behind them, and others have come with focussed fame. What is focussed fame? Well, it is fame earned in one place. Geraldine Farrar, the young American soprano, for example, enjoys a highly focussed fame. She is celebrated throughout Berlin. She is the darling of the Kaiser Wilhelm's capital. On the other hand, Eleanor Broadfoot that was, Eleanore de Claneros that is, has moved by successive stages upon Madrid, Rome, Milan, Vienna and London and has been acclaimed in every one of them. Yet despite her reception in these various and varied centers of musical taste she did not carry across the Atlantic one-tenth of the reclame made for the youthful and comparatively inexperienced Miss Farrar.

The explanation is after all not difficult to find. Miss Farrar made her success in Berlin, where the standard of operatic singing is extremely low. In Germany today two qualities are demanded of opera singers, namely, plenty of tenal power and ability to exercise it from the beginning of the opera till the end. In plain and inelegant language, the acme of lyric art on the German stage is lung power. Every one sings as hard as possible from beginning to end. There are occasional flashes of pianissimi, but there is no middle ground. A beautiful, smooth, sustained cantilena in the medium voice over a subdued and mellow accompaniment is one of the rarest things in Germany. It is almost never heard. As for the finer graces of vocal art, their existence is not even suspected. The Germans learn nothing from Sembrich and Bonci.

But to return to the real point. Berlin is no place to determine the world standing of an operatic artist. Singing of a most crude and uncultured type is accepted there, provided the voice be good and big. Now imagine the sensations of these jaded and dulled Berlin audiences when Geraldine Farrar, with her sinuous and svelte figure, her splendid dark eyes, her restless and temperamental action, her picturesque poses and her frank delineation of passion, appeared before them. Add to these qualities her genuinely fresh and beautiful voice, with its youthful vigor and its reckless plenitude. Is there any wonder that Berlin went into ecstasies over her and thought it had found an operatic jewel of the highest price?

Now what has happened? Miss Farrar has returned to her native land, carrying upon her fair shoulders the burden of this enormous Berlin success. She has essayed to live up to it in the Metropolitan opera house. Of course she had no conception of the nature of her undertaking. In Berlin she was surely told always that in America no one knew anything about art in any of its forms, and that when she came here she would be a revelation to the ignorant and benighted Yankees.

Miss Farrar walked upon the stage of the Metropolitan Opera house, where youth, beauty, fresh and glorious voices and the highest lyric art of the world were no strangers, and she created a sensation by what? By some questionable stage business in "Romeo et Juliette." Every one admired her beauty. Every one was delighted with her fresh, young voice. Every one saw in her a splendid dramatic temperament and the possibility of a notable future. But only a few easily influenced people accepted the verdict of Berlin and acclaimed her as a great artist.

Since the first night there has been little enthusiasm about her. Probably in her opinion, which will be backed by her "friends," this means that the Americans do not know a good singer when they hear one. These poor, foolish Americans, who adored Grisi and Jenny Lind, who worshiped Patti, who loved Gerster, who lavished their praises on Lehmann, who have poured adulation at the feet of Sembrich and Nordica, these foolish Americans do not know anything about singing.

Prophesy is no part of criticism, but in the case of Geraldine Farrar the indications are too plain to be mistaken. She stands in New York at this instant at the parting of the ways. It is open to her to take one of two paths. She may either stay here and study such great singers as come under her observation, learn how to place her upper tones and how to sing in a refined, reposeful, finished style, and become one of the greatest lyric artists the world ever saw, or she may break her contract with Mr. Conried, return to Berlin and scream out a narrow German career in ten years.

If she continues to sing as she does now she will tear all the velvet off her voice in that time and will have left only a dead, wooden, unmusical tone. She has not the physique of a Lehman. She is not a Schumann-Heink. She must use her voice with perfect art or she will blot out its beauty. In Berlin that will make no difference to her, provided she can keep its power. As long as she can scream she will do well enough for Berlin. But the doors of La Scala, Covent Garden and the Metropolitan Opera house will be closed to her.

A happy New Year and many of them!

MARY LEARNED.

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