



MUSIC

By HENRIETTA M. REES.

NCE more the Christmas season has rolled around, with its spirit of good cheer and generous remembrance, its gay festivities, its belated shoppers and the busy preparations for a holiday week. As usual, previous to the Christmas season, there has been a dearth of musical affairs, people being too busy to give them and too busy to attend. Throughout the city on Sunday there will be special Christmas music prepared by the choir, symbolic of the birth of the Christ child, of the wise men and the guiding star, and the chorals of angels shouting "Peace on earth, good will to men." The next thing we know we will be starting upon a new year, with the opportunity for doing more in a musical way than has ever been done before. What have we done in a musical way this year? We started out with bright prospects for a more prosperous and busier season than ever, with attractions both local and by visiting artists of high grade and meritorious worth, ending the spring with the brilliant Mendelssohn choir concert, but we were somewhat halted in our progress by the terrible tornado, which made itself felt in every walk of life in the city, and in spite of several benefit concerts its influence upon musical activity has been marked. After the full of the hot summer months, during which the Happy Hollow club gave a couple of out-door musicals, a few local concerts started the melody of the new season, and up to date the concerts that have been given have been well attended by audiences that showed discrimination and appreciation. It is a notable fact, however, that there have been fewer concerts this year than there were at this same time in the last season. The most promising of the new year are, with the promise of more to follow, and if there are no more calamities Omaha's frail and neglected daughter Music may be in better health and have a stronger constitution next year.

lasted all day long, for Mrs. Semblich is an indefatigable worker. I was her first pupil, and she took as much interest in developing my voice and art as if I had been her own daughter. "In the morning we generally went over songs—songs of all kinds, nations and times—classical Italian and French songs, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Schumann, Debussy, Massenet—everything. Then we had luncheon, and after luncheon I vocalized, and then we read poetry and various other things. We spent much time over the words of the songs I was learning, even inquiring into their deeper philosophic meanings. I can tell you that what Mrs. Semblich does she does thoroughly and from her heart. With her there are no half measures. She goes to the bottom of everything, and she made me go with her. Such an education is indeed rare in these days of slapdash singing, and accounts largely for the lack of artists who are capable of singing the old operas of the bel canto times.

Great contrast is drawn in the personalities of the two great artists, Mme. Melba and Mr. Kubelik, now enjoying a phenomenally successful tour of America. Mme. Melba is ever simple mannered and irrepressibly joyous, while Kubelik is the victim of eccentricities which are a part of him. Melba is fond of athletics and fearless of draughts, so natural in her tastes that she tells reporters she does not possibly see how the public can be interested in that side of her life. A New York paper says: "It is fifteen years since Nellie Melba first dazzled an American audience and her power is undiminished today." The great singer's pet, which is only second to her art, is a farm in Australia. All the world knows of Kubelik's wonderful violin, the "Empress," valued at \$75,000, and constantly guarded by his faithful Hindu servant; that the famous Bohemian's left hand is insured for \$50,000, and in addition to these treasures he married a beautiful Hungarian countess, who is the mother of his five little girls. For the first time Mrs. Kubelik is making the tour with her husband, and the artist's manager writes: "The whole party is jubilant over the promised two weeks' rest in California during the holidays." The Melba-Kubelik Concert company will be heard at the Auditorium on Monday evening, January 12, and Miss Hopper reports that sales to date, which are only made by mail, cover one-fourth of the house capacity.

Of course, we have all seen the waltz of Omaha music given in the Musical Center this last week, the observations and impressions of Leonard Lieblich, the editor, during his recent visit to our city. Weren't we pleased at what he thought of Mr. Kelly and his splendid work with the Mendelssohn Choir, and a little bit ashamed that our city has done nothing substantial in the way of furnishing a financial backing for this organization, which holds a position second to none of its kind anywhere in this country? Where Mr. Lieblich said, "For two hours and a half I listened to choral singing that was a constant delight, choral conducting than which I have experienced none more intelligent... The pianissimo in the Lotti, Pitt and Brian works, the grim humor of the 'Gardner,' 'Cargoes' and the rollickingness of the Bantock and Bridges numbers and the dramatic impetus of the 'Joshua' amazed me beyond words," wouldn't it have been nice to have seen "Omaha shows its appreciation of this remarkable work of Mr. Kelly and the Mendelssohn Choir by a financial backing of \$10,000." We didn't see it. The musicians in Omaha are not the ones who are remiss in support for if one looks over the personnel of the choir, one finds there well known singers, piano teachers, violinists, organists and music lovers from all parts of the city, lending their voices and their encouragement for its success. Other means of distinction among us are always to be seen at its concerts and I have yet to hear of one of them who does not speak enthusiastically about its work. It is rather those who have adopted for their slogan, "Help Boost Omaha," who are neglecting a most valuable opportunity to spread the name of the city as a center of culture all over the country.

If we only had Mr. Lieblich back we would like to give him the unusual opportunity of hearing a pianist who does not sound, an artist who has not only technique, but such poetic conception that one forgets that there is such a thing as technique, and a man who is an inhabitant of our city, Mr. Max Landow. His departure for Boston next year will fill us all with regret. We would also like to have him attend a service at All Saints' church and hear its well trained choir, which starts its professional unaccompanied in the distance at the back of the church and as it progresses toward the altar a soft organ accompaniment begins, which increases in volume until at the altar both voices and organ meet forth in a grand peana of praise. I experienced no more auspicious entry in any of the church services I visited in New York. Of the unaccompanied work of this choir, a woman one Sunday remarked feelingly to Mr. Sims, director and organist: "You have no idea how beautiful the music sounded this morning without the organ." "We wouldn't have been displeased if he had seen what good work is being done by Mr. Cox with the Omaha Symphony Study orchestra, nor if he had heard Mr. Helgren's chorus.

Of the new Strauss opera "Der Rosenkavalier," which was given its American premiere at the Metropolitan Opera house last week, Mr. Henderson writes rather scathingly. Among other things he says the thing has no standing as a work of art. It has not even a good piece of workmanship. The morals are not pretty and the dialogue is rather close to the line not yet crossed in the shameless realism of the contemporaneous theater, as well as some parts of the acts. As for its length, some wise cutting of forty minutes of rubbish that did not "set across" is advised.

The old Tivoli Opera house in San Francisco has been turned into a home for the "movies" with the condition that during the month of March each year it be reserved for grand opera.

Oscar Hammerstein has been enjoined from producing grand opera in New York City or its environs, as the court held that his agreement with the Metropolitan company could not be ignored and that the case did not come under the Sherman anti-trust law.

Mrs. Alma Gluck, a young singer who has met with great success in New York City, has returned from Europe, where she had the rare privilege of studying with Mrs. Semblich, and the distinction of being her first pupil. Miss Gluck in a recent interview told this of the plan of study:

"It was at Mrs. Semblich's villa at Nice, which is really an old castle upon a hilltop overlooking the sea that I lived and a daily lesson, or rather a lesson that

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PROTEST ON ALL STEEL CARS

West Coast Lumber Manufacturers Association Objects to Change.

SAYS IT WILL HURT BUSINESS

Railroad Men Say They Have No Option in the Matter, as Steel Cars Have Been Ordered by Commerce Commission.

A lengthy telegraphic communication in the form of a protest from the West Coast Lumber Manufacturers' association, composed of lumber manufacturers of Oregon and Washington, now holding an annual convention in Portland, has been received at the executive offices of the Union Pacific here.

All of the cars that the Union Pacific is manufacturing or buying for the freight service are now constructed of steel. The change of material used in construction is not because of any voluntary decision of the company or its officials, but because the Interstate Commerce commission has issued an order, applying not only to the Union Pacific, but to all other roads as well, and to the effect that by the end of 1915 all cars used in the handling of freight of every kind and description must be of steel, entirely displacing wood.

Under the provisions of the Interstate Commerce commission order, any road that operates cars of wood construction after the end of 1915, will be subjected to heavy penalties. The penalties are to be regulated by the number of wood constructed cars in use. For instance, if a railroad company is operating 1,000 wood cars, the daily fines will be 1,000 times greater than those levied on a road that has but one such car in use.

Realizing that there is no possibility of securing a reconsideration of the commission's order, every railroad operating into Omaha is bending every energy to secure the steel freight equipment and have it in service at the time fixed by the ruling.

Railroad men of both the operating and traffic departments declare that while the change from wood to all-steel construction is going to be expensive at the start, in the end the steel cars will be cheaper. They say, too, that the all-steel will add materially to the safety first plan, for when a wreck occurs to a train of all-steel, fire cannot occur, thereby perhaps causing loss of life and great property damage. With the steel cars there will be little destruction of the contents. Instead of breaking up, the all-steel cars will simply be collapsed and the contents held in place instead of being scattered over the country.

MANY STUDENTS TO ATTEND VOUNTEER CONVENTION Enroute to the students' volunteer convention to be held in Kansas City December 31 to January 11, several hundred delegates are expected to pass through Omaha. The delegates from Minnesota, the Dakotas and the northwest coast country are expected here early Tuesday, December 30, remaining until evening.

Plans Ready for Bids on the New Fontenelle Hotel

Bids on the contract for the building of the new Fontenelle hotel are to be opened January 13. Invitations have been sent out to a dozen contractors throughout the country to bid for the job. The plans for the hotel have just been completed and approved. On January 13 the figures of the various contractors are to be back in Omaha. The bids are then to be opened in the presence of the architect, the president and

some of the directors of the hotel company, and probably the representatives of the various bidders themselves. Tabulation will then be made, although it is not likely that the contract can be awarded at once.

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OMAHA COMPANY GETS CONTRACT TO BUILD THE COUNTY BRIDGES

A contract for the furnishing of material for construction of bridges in Douglas county for next year was let by the Board of County Commissioners to the Omaha Structural Iron works by a vote of three to two. A spirited fight against the letting of the contract at the prices named was made by Commissioners Lynch and East.

No total price is named in the contract, but in previous years work ordered by the board has exceeded \$5,000 a year in cost. The bridge contract has occupied the attention of the board for four months, bids having been previously rejected once.

Commissioners McDonald, Harte and O'Connor voted for the letting of the contract and Commissioners Lynch and East voted against it.

"Similar bids for this work have been rejected once by this board," said Mr. Lynch, "but the Omaha Structural Iron works, the low bidder now as before, has not reduced its prices. Some figures are changed, but they remain the same in substance."

Commissioner McDonald, Harte and O'Connor expressed the opinion that the prices as quoted were the best that could be secured.

Myron Learned, attorney for the plaintiffs, in the rebuttal before the United States district court closed his arguments in the case of the minority stockholders of the St. Joseph & Grand Island Railway company and the Union Pacific.

Grand Island Case Now in Judges' Hands

He admitted that the suit was not based on the Sherman anti-trust law, nor upon the anti-trust legislation of the states of Kansas and Nebraska, though these alleged violations were contended by the plaintiffs early in the argument of the case.

Judges T. C. Munger and W. H. Munger, sitting jointly in the case, announced at the close of the argument that it was probable that no decision would be rendered before February of March.

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Advertisement for brass goods including a bellows and a small stove.

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Advertisement for Julia Marlowe cigars, featuring a cigar and the text "PURE HAVANA CIGARS... Look Good, Taste Good, Are Good"

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