

MUSIC

By JEAN P. DUFFIELD

SERGE PROKOFIEFF'S new opera, "The Love for Three Oranges," provocative paragraphs concerning which have occasionally sifted through the columns of the musical press, has at last been completed, and received its world's premiere in Chicago on the night of December 29, the composer himself conducting.

Described by one commentator as "the most amusing burlesque opera of the day," the work appears, from all reports, to have earned such characterization justly. The roster of the play's personages is headed by "The King of Trifles," who is very naturally followed by "The Prince, his son." Then there is a prime minister, a magician, a witch, "Fata Morgana," a devil, a master of ceremonies, and to round out the merry company, there are the three oranges, or rather, Princesses of Orange for each fruit on being opened is found to contain an enchanted princess.

And what these characters are unable to bring about in the way of fantastic hilarity is accomplished by sundry troupes of riddles, comiques, lyrics, tragiques, empty-headed and devils. Small wonder that one critic was led to call it a sort of "Alice in Wonderland," done in terms of gigantic, exotic imaginations. This same critic, Edward Moore, of the Tribune, fears the music is too much for the general audience. Mr. Prokofieff, except for a few notes in the score, might have loaded up a shotgun with a thousand notes of varying pitch, and fired them against the ears of the audience. All the reviewers make special mention of the amount of humor in the music, and agree in conceding to it complete equality.

However, we are led to wonder how this could well be otherwise if not exact. Mr. Prokofieff's comment, quoted above, is exact.

Mr. Rosenfeld of the Daily News finds satire as well as humor in the piece, and says there is "singing, dancing, shouting, pushing and caterwauling as the situations demand."

Emil Raymond, reporting for Musical America, finds the score difficult and frankly impressionistic. He has surmised as much. He also finds "brilliant flights to dizzy altitudes, and ribald staccatos that puncture the set pieces as well."

Rene Devries, of the Musical Courier, says of the staging: "A more glorious panoramic production has not been seen in Chicago." But he views the work from another angle when he writes that singers will "abhor the opera, as no one role is more important than another. There are no arias, no vocal effects that will bring down the house, but circus tricks that make clowns of some of the principals."

Truly, "The Love for Three Oranges" must be a picturesque opera, to call forth such a rare flow of critical rhetoric.

Does "music" pay? Ask Dr. Richard Strauss, the great German composer, conductor-pianist, who sailed from New York, January 3, with a sum estimated at \$50,000 as the proceeds from his brief visit to this country. Dr. Strauss began his American tour on October 31, and finished on January 1, in the meantime appearing as conductor of four different orchestras, and accompanying various vocalists in recitals of his own songs. In all Dr. Strauss appeared in 40 different concerts, his tour bringing him as far west as Kansas City and St. Louis. Incidentally the conductor found it necessary to visit Uncle Sam's internal revenue collector, to whom he surrendered approximately \$8,000 in the form of an income tax.

A clear perspective of Dr. Strauss' status in the musical world is afforded by the letter written to him on the eve of his departure by Otto H. Kahn, chairman of the board of directors of the Metropolitan Opera, wherein the eminent German is addressed as "the foremost composer of our day and generation" and a "hearer of the torch of genius." Mr. Kahn's letter directs attention to the honors and appreciation everywhere showered on the famous composer, and adducing this circumstance as a reason for his early return to this country.

"I am glad to see that the public is realizing that the recital field is my forte, and that my best work is not confined to operas and oratorios," said Mr. Middleton in a recent interview in a New York paper. "Not that I don't love oratorios. I love them, especially 'Elijah.' And the public certainly agrees with him in this predilection—when he is singing in this noble role. His popularity in oratorio is indicated by the fact that he has appeared over 200 times in the 'Messiah,' and 150 times in the 'Elijah.' Mr. Middleton will be heard in concert at the Municipal auditorium on Friday evening, February 3, being the third concert in the series arranged by the Omaha Business Woman's club."

Musical Notes.

Miss Ruth Middleton, the 12-year-old daughter of Arthur Middleton, who is to appear in concert at the Municipal auditorium on February 3, has, since the death of her mother two years ago, made her home in Omaha with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Wiley Middleton, 2170 Jones street. Miss Ruth attends the Dundee public school and is making rapid advancement in the study of piano music under the direction of Madame Borglum. Ruth's aunt, Miss Angie Middleton, is director of music in the public schools of Council Bluffs, and gives her personal attention to her niece's musical education.

A piano recital will be given by pupils of Miss Helen Mackin in her studio on Sunday afternoon, January 22. The following pupils will take part: Helen Francis, Joseph Zeitmann, Frank Barret, Margaret Machal, Tom Kennedy, Alfred Anderson, Stanton Kennedy, Bessie Mahan, Alvina Michaels, Earline Francis, George Weideman, Jane Warner, Gertrude Masterson, Lorine Sleeper, Hazel Kahn, William Hogarth, Alice Wurgler, Carriboth and Roberta McGill.

A dramatic recital will be given at Zion Lutheran church on Wednesday evening by Mr. Edward C. Emerson, who will be assisted by Miss Emily Cleve, violin, and Miss Eva Nelson, organ. Mr. Emerson will give "King Robert of Sicily," accompanied on the pipe organ by Miss Nelson, and "The White Ship" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Miss Nelson

Yale Football Star in Movies



Seldom does athletic ability stand a motion picture actor in better stead than in the case of Maurice Flynn, the former football star of Yale, who plays the male lead in "The Last Trail," now running at the Moon theater.

Young Flynn is tall, slender and well-knit as the Indian of old— and muscle paired with a most engaging personality. Miss Cleve will add two violin numbers to the program. Adelyn Wood presented 14 pupils in a piano recital at her home on Saturday afternoon, January 21. Those who played were: James Bednar, Margaret Harvey, Robert Butler, Jack Young, Katherine Harvey, George Johnston, Jr., Elaine Buell, Donald Morrison, Elizabeth Johnston, Mary Jane Lemere, Katherine Gray, Jean, Williams, Betty Hicks.

Allen Spencer, pianist, of Chicago will appear in recital at the Midland college auditorium in Fremont, Neb., on the night of January 26. Many people in the eastern part of the state will be interested in hearing him. Mr. Spencer is one of the leading teachers of the American conservatory at Chicago and a concert pianist of note. He will play the following program:

- "King's Hunting Jig".....John Bull
- "Pastorale".....Chopin
- "Gavotte" (Arranged by Brahms).....Grieg
- "Scherzo".....Mendelssohn
- "Thema with Variations in A Minor".....Chopin
- "Pavane".....Schumann
- "Berceuse" (Op. 27).....Chopin
- "No. 25".....Chopin
- "Autumn".....Chopin
- "By the Sea".....Chopin
- "Capriccio in F Minor".....Debussy
- "The Little Shepherd".....Debussy
- "At the Spring".....Debussy
- "Tarentelle" in E Minor.....Liszt

Three Talmadge Sisters Settled on West Coast

Constance Talmadge, who recently gave up her New York studio to make her next picture on the coast, has been filming the water scenes for "The Divorcee" at Avalon, Santa Catalina island, and is so intrigued by the glass bottom power boats, the flowers in winter, and the mildness of the climate, that she says she doesn't miss Broadway "first-nights" at all.

"California," according to Constance, "is not only the land of sunshine, but the land of sanity. People work hard here, but without the hectic strain that lines their faces and ruins their dispositions in New York. There is no hanging on the subway straps, or jostling of elbows in elevated trains. Even the clerks and secretaries on salaries of \$35 to \$50 a week, have their own Fords out here, and all their young married couples buy attractive bungalows on the installment plan. The outdoor life keeps them in good health, and there is a spirit everywhere of cordiality and helpfulness that is very wonderful. However, I shall never go back on New York! I love its excitement, just as I love California's peace, but I think a little change is good for all of us, don't you? It takes the cobwebs out of our settled habits of thinking always in one groove!"

Constance and her mother have just taken a new and attractive house with Mr. and Mrs. Buster Keaton (Mrs. Keaton is sister Natalie Talmadge) at Westmoreland place, Hollywood, and Norma has rented a very beautiful home on South Alexandria avenue, where her ballroom alone can accommodate 100 couples.

He-Man Stars Deride Flappers

Old-Fashioned Girl Holds Top Place as Sweetheart of Films; Actors Prefer Her to Aggressive "Sprints" With Bobbed Hair and Rolled Stockings.

Which feminine type is most popular among the real he-man stars of the screen today—the modern girl or the sweet old-fashioned girl?

First of all, let's get a picture of the girls. A sketch of the modern girl: Plucked eyebrows, beaded lashes, no paint on cheeks, but gobs of rouge on the lips, face as white as snow, lips carmine red, roll-your-own stockings, exaggerated earplugs or straight bobbed hair unless naturally curly. If bobbed hair is worn, low-heeled shoes are the rage. If hirsute mountains bury the ears, high heels are adorned to match. Vivacious, athletic, aggressive.

A closeup of the old-fashioned girl: Sweet, retiring, plainly but becomingly dressed, hair done in comely fashion to frame a face that does not need to be made over by the beauty specialist. Gentle, steadfast and home loving, but heroic and emotional within.

Give us the sweet, old-fashioned girl every time, it is the chorus that comes from those men who have distinguished themselves on the screen in strong, virile drama not of the ballroom or parlor variety.

Flappers Get the Air. Check up and see for yourself. There are, for instance, stalwart Bill Hart, bashful Charlie Ray, rugged Hobart Bosworth, Lewis S. Stone, Tom Moore and a host of other sterling actors to whom the flapper type is an unknown quantity in their motion picture world.

The old-fashioned girl, demure and charming, self-reliant and capable, is invariably their screen sweetheart.

Just such a type is Jane Novak, whose latest vehicle is "The Rosary," a forthcoming release.

Throughout her film career Jane has been ever known as the "sweet, old-fashioned girl." Probably her first bid for fame came when William S. Hart selected her as his leading lady. In all she has appeared in five of Hart's biggest successes. Her splendid work with Bill Hart established her as a most admirable contrast on the silver-sheet for he-man stars. Straightway, such actors as Ray, Bosworth, Stone, Tom Moore and others sought her screen hand.

Jane Novak's Success. The "sweet, old-fashioned girl" soon became almost as popular with the fans as the stars with whom she appeared. Producers sought her services for all-star casts. And with her hit in Marshall Neilan's production of the James Oliver Curwood story, "The River's End," Miss Novak practically achieved genuine stardom.

As a matter of fact, exhibitors throughout the country started her of their own accord in such epics of the outdoors as James Oliver Curwood's "Kazan" and "Isobell."

The role of Vera Mather, which is portrayed by Miss Novak in "The Rosary," has long been cherished ideal of actresses of both the spoken and silent drama. It was originally played for the screen by Kathlyn Williams. But in the new version of the famous classic Bernard McConville has written an original story inspired by the theme of both the stage play and song. Vera Mather is now a younger woman, but of the same type which makes the role ideal for Jane Novak.

Suffice it to say that the "sweet, old-fashioned girl"—ever a capable dramatic actress—may be expected to give one of the most finished creations of her motion picture career.

Was Sheba Clever Politician or a Tricky Vampire? Who was the Queen of Sheba? Was she vampire or Amazon, trickster or seer?

Miss Betty Blythe has a positive opinion. Miss Blythe is the young woman who interpreted the character of the ancient, most beautiful queen for the production, "Queen of Sheba," at the Sun theater this week.

The Queen of Sheba was a politician, says Miss Blythe, settling the mooted question. As a wise politician she was not above using the wiles of her sex and her physical charms to attract the most powerful magnate of the ages, the man who was able to acquire and support a thousand wives. "Solomon was not bothered by landlords or grocers. He was able to study and to write some of the most beautiful poetry of the ages. His name endures. But just exactly what was her name? She is known as the Queen of Sheba, but was she not known by another name?" asks Miss Blythe.

Rudolph Valentino, who has just been signed to a three-year contract by Paramount, and Gene Acker, were divorced by a court in Los Angeles last week.

The youngest electrician's youngest daughter, aged five, was playing by herself in the dark corner of an empty set. A piece of colored cheesecloth fell from her head to the floor, trailing behind her tiny feet like a train. She strutted proudly. "Who are you pretending to be, dear?" I asked.

"I'm not pretending," she said loftily. "I am a princess."

"I believe you," I admitted gravely. "And thanks for your advice on my new role. Mother, good actresses and children don't merely pretend. They actually believe!"

Speculation regarding releasing plans for "The Rosary," recently completed, was set at rest this week when definite announcement was made it would be distributed as a special by Associated First National Pictures, Inc. The picture is based on an original story by Bernard McConville, inspired by the theme of the play by Edward E. Rose.

Lewis S. Stone heads the cast, in which are included Jane Novak, Wallace Beery, Robert Gordon, Eugenie Besserer, Dore Davidson, Pomeroy Cannon, Bert Woodruff, Mildred June and Harold Goodwin.

Louis Burston is producing "According to Hoyle," with David Butler and Helen Ferguson.

Barthelmess Sees Need in Movies for Humanness. Humanness is wanted for the screen. If motion pictures are to meet the popular appeal they must have this in mind, according to Richard Barthelmess, the young motion picture star whose starring picture, "To'able David," opens today at the Alito theater. He has ideas of his own regarding what he believes is the future of the silent drama. He declares wholesome stories by recognized contemporary authors are the best material for motion pictures.

"Simple unextravagant stories portraying life as it is are what the public desires," he contends. "Nobody is perfect. All of us have faults as well as virtues. There is no superman outside of the imagination of too fervid authors and the public recognizes that fact. In consequence of this, why attempt to insult the public intelligence or to provoke its ridicule by creating characters that the audiences know could not exist."

Vital Stories. "The public is the real judge of what is good or bad in motion pictures. Wholesome stories with enough drama in them to make them vital are what the people want. They don't like heroes who are always doing the right thing, and they get satiated with heroines who always have curls and a sweet disposition. The public has risen in arms against the cheap type of dime novel trash which was handed them in bygone days—when the good men and women were entirely perfect and the bad were absolutely rotten. No matter what anyone may say, the public has proven it hasn't a 12-year-old mind. Its mentality is that of a grown thinking man and woman, and unless the picture producers realize the fact, their work cannot last."

"By Heck." Farm life may not be a new comedy inspiration, but Mack Sennett has taken the subject and implanted in it a hundred new twists that give it the sparkle of new-fallen dew on a close-cropped pasture. Bill Bevan and Mildred June have the starring roles in this comedy which Mack Sennett has called "By Heck," and which will be shown at the Strand theater this week.

Popular Actress Scores Success



The success scored by Lila Lee in William de Mille's production of "Midsummer Madness," is apt to be duplicated by her artistic impersonation of a chorus girl in Mr. de Mille's latest production, "After the Show," which is the chief cinema attraction at the Strand theater this week.

Miss Lee is recognized as one of the most popular screen players in the country. Her interpretation of the role entrusted to her in "After the Show" is delightful and she proves an admirable foil to Jack Holt, who has the leading man's part.

And when the rich young "angel" of the show came into her life with his mid-night suppers and love talk—

It's a story that runs through laughter and tears to an end you will joy to see!

MACK SENNETT COMEDY "BY HECK!" A gosh darned good comedy with many a hearty laugh.

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And when the rich young "angel" of the show came into her life with his mid-night suppers and love talk—

It's a story that runs through laughter and tears to an end you will joy to see!

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