

Nordica's Career Abroad

HER UNPARALLELED TRIUMPHS IN WAGNERIAN ROLES

Appropos of Nordica's first appearance in Portland, Thursday, February 12, a brief resume of her career abroad may be found interesting to those who know of it only in a general way. With her triumphs in America every one is of course more or less familiar. Her foreign debut was made in Brescia, Italy, in the role of Violetta, in "La Traviata." Her success led to important engagements in Italian cities, and at St. Petersburg, where she sang during two winters at the Imperial Italian Opera with the first stars of the operatic firmament. Her triumph in the well-known roles created by Verdi may be best judged by the fact that her interpretation of the greatest of them all, his mystical Aida, is said to be unsurpassed in the realm of Italian music. Paris was stormed and conquered next, her Marguerite ("Faust") and Ophelia ("Hamlet") having been studied under the composers themselves, Charles Goun-

the carrying power of her voice as something quite phenomenal. On one occasion she sang at the Crystal Palace, London, an auditorium that seats 5,000 people, and her voice filled the vast space without the least strain. Her feat of singing on Mont Blanc also attracted much attention. Apart from these purely physical qualities of voice, she has given interpretations of well-known roles that have won her great praise. When she appeared at Covent Garden as Brangäne, in "Tristan and Isolde," the Pall Mall Gazette said: "Both in singing and acting she was almost ideal, and it is not saying too much when we express our doubt that even Bayreuth could furnish a better Brangäne." When she appeared in "Faust" the Athenæum commented upon her work as follows: "Miss Esther Palliser has followed up her success as Brangäne by an embodiment of the most important part of Marguerite, still more noteworthy for girlish grace and vocal excellence. It was throughout an example of the art which conceals art, and though, perhaps,



NORDICA, GREATEST OF AMERICAN SINGERS.

That Nordica has no peer among American singers, and no superior in the world today, is generally conceded because of her delightful and many-sided art, her beautiful, highly cultured voice, and her irresistible charm of manner and person. Her invincible pluck and determination to overcome all obstacles and succeed; her indefatigable and conscientious work; which she is endowed, have earned for her the exalted place she holds on the two continents. Not the least admirable of her many fine qualities is the fact that her chief pride is the appreciation and praise accorded her in her native land by the American people. Nordica will sing in Portland for the first time at the Marquam Thursday, February 12.

nod and Ambrose Thomas. Her Paris triumph was followed by another at Covent Garden, London, which firmly established her reputation as a great singer throughout England and led to important oratorio engagements.

But there still remained one last well-nigh impregnable rock to conquer—German opera. These difficult roles were undertaken and mastered, one by one, until in 1894 Nordica was chosen from among all the prima donnas on the operatic stage eligible for the part to create the role of Elza at the first performance of "Lohengrin" at Bayreuth. Such was her triumph that opera-houses throughout Germany endeavored to secure her for special performances. She was encouraged to add to her repertoire Isolde in "Tristan und Isolde," and Brunnhilde in "Walkure," "Siegfried" and "Gotterdammerung." In her presentation of these roles, which she studied under Madame Wagner's personal supervision, many hold her to be without a rival on either continent.

The latest European honor to be conferred upon her was the distinction of opening the new Wagner Theater at Munich last September, in "Tristan und Isolde." Her conquest of the critical and conservative audience was complete and unequivocal, the people bursting into storms of applause. Their delight was so unbounded that, even before the close of the first performance, she was re-engaged for the Wagner roles in the same theater next season.

An attempt is being made to have Nordica give two of her famous Wagnerian songs in her Portland programme.

JOSEF HOFMANN.

His Ideas on Piano Practice Attract the Attention of Critics.

Josef Hofmann's appearance at the Marquam tomorrow night, February 3, will afford Portland music-lovers an opportunity for comparing the young celebrity with the great artists—Paderewski, Rosenthal, Sauer, Godowsky, Fanny Bloomfield Zeltzer, Marc Hambourg and others—who have preceded him. Young Hofmann's ideas concerning piano practice are just now attracting much attention from American critics. As the pupil of Rubinstein and Liszt, and of D'Albert, who has so long held first place as a pianist among the Europeans, Hofmann's views naturally obtain respect. He discounts the prevalent maxims as to the desirability of regular hours for practice, and holds that the professional musician should avoid getting into set habits. In a recent talk with William Armstrong, the Chicago critic, Mr. Hofmann said, as reported in the Etude: "Personally, I find it a bad plan to practice on the day in public. One or two days before a concert it is all well and good to practice it, but never later. Then, when you come before your audience your mind is fresh, and the interpretation will consequently be better. When I am playing I never feel ill. Even when I was injured by falling from my bicycle I could play in concerts when the physician pronounced me unable. Once at Tiffins I played with a high fever on me, but that did not affect my work."

ESTHER PALLISER.

Former Portland Singer's Triumphs in England.

Esther Palliser has just returned to America from her long residence abroad. She will be easily recalled by Portland musicians, as she was for several years a resident of this city, her name off the stage being Emma Walters. Her charming personality and her remarkable voice, which is of great range, allowing her to sing contralto as well as soprano roles, made her many friends in this city, who will be glad to hear of her unusual success in England. One writer describes

not dramatically powerful, was certainly one of the most charming impersonations ever witnessed." On one occasion she was engaged to take the place of Melba, and won much applause for her work, although the audience was most discriminating and exacting. Her repeated successes were rewarded by a request to sing before Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle, where she gave the part of Michaela in "Carmen." Her opera repertoire includes the most important roles, and she sings all of the oratorios that are produced in this day. Indeed, in oratorio, as in opera, Miss Palliser stands at the top in England. She has sung with brilliant success to overflowing audiences at the great English music festivals, and in Albert Hall sang for seven consecutive seasons the soprano solos with the Royal Choral Society. The English public are cordial to Miss Palliser, says the Musical Courier, "a singer with a noble voice unimpeded, and an artist approaching the zenith of her dramatic and intellectual powers."

Of German, French and Welsh ancestry, Miss Palliser may have her forefathers to thank for the number of her talents. She loves work above all things. Abroad she is known for her love of antique furniture and jewels, and as a collector of both she has been very fortunate. During a large part of Miss Palliser's residence in Portland she sang in the choir of the First Baptist Church, where her father, who was a well-known and successful musician, was choir director. He made quite a reputation as a teacher, and deserves much credit for his daughter's vocal training. Miss Palliser also was a member of the Cathedral choir in Portland, and her friends here speak of her as having very high ideals and a strong character. She was known to dislike the idea of appearing in light opera, and soon gave it up for more serious work, in keeping with her high conception of art and its relation to life. She is said to have been one of the very few singers who have been accepted socially in London.

Her sister, May Walters, is now singing contralto roles with the Bostonians.

The Aeolian Recital.

The strongest evidence of merit in any entertainment is shown by the number of people who will brave a storm to be in attendance upon it. Last Wednesday evening was one of the stormiest nights experienced in Portland for some years, yet over 100 people donned overcoats and wraps and attended the Aeolian Company's recital.

Those who braved the storm were well repaid for the coming, while those who remained away missed a rich musical treat. Mr. Ellwell opened the programme, playing Suppe's grand overture, "Morning, Noon and Night," on the pipe organ. The selection was happily received and heartily applauded. This was followed by Chopin's "Polonaise Militaire," by Mr. Bruce on the piano, and was played with a spirit evincing a proper conception of the piece. Following this a beautiful waltz-song, with flute obligato, was a pleasing selection, and then "Les Joyeux Papillons," by Greig, was all that was expected by lovers of the dainty, delicate etyle.

Liszt's Second Rhapsodie was repeated by request and proved the most pleasing number on the programme, and Mr. Bruce received an ovation at the close of his masterly rendition of this most difficult piano selection. The "Tannhauser" overture closed the programme, and the audience was fully paid for the effort it took to leave a warm, comfortable fire on such a stormy night, for the sole purpose of attending a musicale.

Sousa a Novelist Now.

John Philip Sousa, the bandmaster, has found time between his concerts, compositions and transatlantic tours to devote himself to literary work, and a novel from his pen entitled "The Fifth String; or, the Story of the Mysterious Violin," will soon make its appearance. Mr. Sou-

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their ostentatious proclamation of a Jewish nationality that cannot be content with anything but a Jewish state is merely playing into the hands of the enemies of their race. It is a confirmation of the contention that English citizenship has been conferred on a number of people who can never be Englishmen, and Jews may wake up one day to find that while Zionism has failed to help out a separate Jewish nationality, it has destroyed that which years of laborious work have achieved in free countries like England. Why should Jews turn round and warn Englishmen that they are engaged in a fatuous and impossible experiment? Why halt, of our

own will, on the path which has been traversed with such pain and labor, and wander back to the point from which the centuries of marching began?"

This is the position which the Israelite has assumed from the very beginning of this perilous agitation. Motives should be of course always be considered, but wise men have ever held a fool to be more dangerous than a deliberate evil-doer, especially to those whom he seeks to serve. We therefore firmly believe that Jewish Zionism has in the few years of its existence done more harm to Israel than has Christian anti-Semitism, and that Herzl and Nordau and their misguided followers have been most efficient allies of Drumont, Stocker and their accomplices.

Let who will speak with guarded consideration of these people, the Israelite has a duty to perform and will not refrain from plain speaking. Attention must be called to the danger that lies in the Zionist crusade. Sane men should lose no opportunity to denounce it in public and private as an exotic in this country, as it is in England, as the product of diseased minds, too weak to bear the light burden of social discrimination, or grasped at as a last hope by the unfortunate whom Russia and Roumania have tortured until they have been driven to the brink of despair.

Zionism and anti-Semitism are twin enemies of the Jews, and the former is potentially the more dangerous.

Bryan's Plea for the Small College.

Chicago Record-Herald.
While the plea of Colonel Bryan for the small college, embodied in his address to the alumni of Illinois College, presented no arguments that have not been elaborated by President Charles F. Thwing and other well-known educators, the sentiments expressed are none the less timely and commendable. They are especially timely in view of the present tendency to centralize education as well as industrial forces.

Mr. Bryan, himself an alumnus of a small college, places special emphasis upon the moral element in college training, and shows wherein the smaller institution may be better adapted for the inculcation of those principles which lie at the basis of character and which tend to implant the highest ideals of citizenship. On this point he says:

Josef Hofmann and the Pianola

I promised to write you my critical opinion of the Pianola after I had time and opportunity to thoroughly test it.

I find that your instrument is designed for reproducing pianoforte literature and offers facilities for expression that will enable an intelligent player to give a very close imitation of hand-playing. I have been surprised to discover to what an extent one can, with a little practice, control the dynamic effects.

The selection of the music you have published is excellent and very cleverly arranged for the Pianola.

I think what has impressed me as much as anything is the ease with which the instrument is played. It is simplicity itself. To summarize briefly, it is my opinion that in all essentials of artistic piano-playing the Pianola is the best instrument of this type to reproduce the piano music. JOSEF HOFMANN.

upon their lives that time will not efface. Moreover, the closer personal contact between the small student body and the president or the professors enables the latter to exert a more direct influence upon the lives of the students.

If the ultimate aim of education is the building of character it cannot be detailed that the small college occupies an important place in the educational and civic forces of the Republic. That they must have exerted tremendous influence in shaping our National life and in developing our institutions is apparent from the fact that there are now in existence in the United States no less than 570 insti-

tutions of higher learning which had in 1861 less than 1000 students each, while only 42 institutions had a larger enrollment than this.

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