

More Trouble Brewing Between Opera Directors and Managers

Metropolitan in Limelight Again Because of Dippel and Gatti-Cazaza Feud—Mary Garden Talks.

NEW YORK, Dec. 12.—(Special Correspondence.)—The wisacres are shaking their heads and saying "I told you so." This intelligent remark is caused by existing conditions at the Metropolitan Opera-House, which are not so agreeable as they might be, involving as they do the feelings of Mr. Gatti-Cazaza, Italian, and Andreas Dippel, German. Publicity was precipitated through the signing of a three-year contract with Mr. Gatti-Cazaza and Toscanini, while Mr. Dippel's contract expires at the end of one year.

The brewing of the storm began last year when the Metropolitan Opera people determined to get rid of Corried. Dippel was then one of the tenors of the company. His chief virtue was his reliability and his knowledge of an enormous number of tenor roles in three languages. Mr. Dippel could sing you Tristan or Lohengrin, E. M. Pinkerton with equal facility and on equally short notice. But Mr. Dippel was more than a mere tenor. He was a very good business man and he was a social favorite. His friends were Mr. Dippel called at the last moment to don the costume of some disabled singer that he was not dining at the tables of the rich patrons of music. Naturally Mr. Dippel had friends among the directors of the Opera-House. Not unnaturally he cherished ambitions to succeed Corried as director of the house. Influence in his favor was brought to bear on the executive committee, and when the choice of a director was announced, it was "Dippel and Gatti-Cazaza jointly." Mr. Dippel accepted the honor with alacrity. Mr. Gatti was not informed of all the details of the arrangement till he had arrived in New York. He came believing he was to be the sole director of the opera and found that Mr. Dippel was his co-director. This did not suit him apparently.

It suited him less when he found that orders he had given had been countermanded by Mr. Dippel and that Mr. Dippel had taken the part of the singers in controversies with his favorite conductor, Mr. Toscanini. Presently Mr. Gatti made known to the directors that he must be the sole director of the Metropolitan. The directors responded by renewing the contract of Mr. Gatti for two years; also the contract of Mr. Toscanini. But they left the contract of Mr. Dippel unrenewed. Then the singers—Caruso, Emery, Farrar and others—who did not like the arbitrary ways of Mr. Toscanini, petitioned the directors in the interest of Mr. Dippel; and the directors joined issue by announcing to the public that Mr. Gatti was the sole director of the Opera-House. A great deal of unfortunate friction is likely to result. Undoubtedly great improvements have been made in the Metropolitan this year. Mr. Dippel's friends say he is responsible for them chiefly. The friends of Mr. Gatti say they are of his planning and execution. It will be difficult to place the credit where it belongs.

Then there is the question of German opera. Dippel is an advocate of German opera; Gatti claims that he, too, is a friend of Wagner, and points to his record in Milan. But the fact that he is an Italian convinces the Germans that he is going to subordinate the German to the Italian music, and they are particularly of Mr. Dippel.

Nothing could be greater folly than the statements that German opera is in danger, as the record of both Gatti-Cazaza and Toscanini needs their attention of Wagnerian opera in Italy at La Scala. The directors expressed themselves as greatly pleased with the work done by Gatti-Cazaza and their confidence in his judgment and ability to keep the Metropolitan at the very highest standard of excellence.

Interest was at its highest on Thursday night when Toscanini conducted a tremendous performance of "Gotterdammerung," which he had rehearsed and prepared himself.

It was a great performance and one in which he proved that Toscanini has the splendor of Wagner as much at heart as though he were a dyed-in-the-wool German. This is the most difficult of the Wagnerian operas, and the fact that the Italian conducted it without a score is perhaps one of the most prodigious of his feats.

De Goerza, the baritone, has returned from his Western trip, and in an interview with the Musical Leader and Conductor Goer, he said some remarkably complimentary things about the West.

Being asked as to his belief in the artistic future of the West, Mr. De Goerza declared that the West offered a most fertile field for the serious singer, "for," said he, "the people do not hear, not from what they read, but from what they see. To earn approval in the West, an artist does not need an operatic or foreign reputation. It is the public which decides on his merit, and it remains loyal, despite whatever may be written about him. But let me emphasize the fact that the artist must be able to meet every requirement. In other words, he must give full value."

When asked to give an example, "well," replied Mr. De Goerza, "we go from one end of the country to the other, take the case of Tetrazzini, who has not been recognized by some of the principal Eastern critics. And yet she is idolized, because the public cannot help seeing the extraordinary qualities of the woman. Well, it is the same in the West. The public in America will not be misled by just whatever any Tom, Dick or Harry may choose to write; the public requires talent, intelligence and art, and it bestows upon being pleased. If a singer can conform to requirements, the audience can be won at all what may have been written."

For Western managers Mr. De Goerza has an especial word of advice. He speaks particularly of Miss Lola Steers and Miss Coman, who he declares are as unique as they are capable. Their management is perfectly wonderful and he predicts a great future for these clever women.

People of San Francisco should be grateful also to Mr. Greenbaum for presenting always the best and for being personally interested in the programme given.

Some of the managers in America are not to kill any singer under their management if he (the singer) is popular. Of course not without the singer's consent. The singer can realize these. One of the things a singer must guard against, especially on the road, is singing too much. Something more than money should be considered. The singer's health, his voice, his attention and constant devotion to art, which require a day's rest between engagements, not even traveling on such days. This matter of "the king out" is a serious one. Artists must keep faith with the public, and this is impossible if a singer is tired out when he goes on. The man or woman who sings 20 songs in one evening is more taxed than traveling the opera or light opera singer whom the work is lightened and shared.

Mr. De Goerza says, "in advice from artists that let me warn him to look up his own schedule, see he has a day between concerts, see that he is fresh to his health. The public and he will be rewarded by the sincerest, most appreciative audience he has ever known. Any well-known artist has gone West only to fall ignominiously, not taking proper caution to keep himself in trim and through being too rapacious about accepting engagements. Careless interpretation of loss of voice do not go in the West, and don't underestimate the San Francisco public, for there is an enthusiasm there which is usually only found in the southern countries of Europe."

At the Manhattan success, so far, has been Massenet's "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame." This charming French work turns away a large number of people at every performance, and it will probably not be displaced in the affections of the Manhattan clientele even by the revival of "Tales of Hoffman" next week and the reappearance of Melba, who will sing Miami in "La Boheme" on



GATTI CAZAZZA, ITALIAN NEW DIRECTOR AT THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE.



ANDREAS DIPPSEL, WHO CONTRACTS AS DIRECTOR AT THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE.



MINGHA ELMAN THE GREAT YOUNG RUSSIAN VIOLINIST



ARTHUR TOSCANINI MUSICAL CONDUCTOR AT THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE

Monday night with Zenatello as Rudolph. Mary Garden is very much in love with the part of Jean the Juggler, and when I went the other morning to ask her opinions of this latest creation she received me in her charming blue boudoir, which heightens the wonderful blue of her eyes. There were certainly three of us present when she consented to tell me about the role. Miss Garden was there, I was there, and it would be impossible not to believe that little Jean the Juggler was playing his tricks at her feet, leaving off only long enough to receive the caresses which she was so ready to lavish upon him.

He was there in that little faded green coat and those wonderfully eloquent and beautifully molded gray legs; he was there in the charm and simplicity of a child, even though more years had passed over him than his mind reflected, and the illusion was perfect that Miss Garden had found this new role and had adopted him with such intensity and affection as to make Thais, Louise and several others green with envy. I discovered upon this occasion that an actress can take into her affections a new role, much as a mother takes a new baby, without displacing the older members of her family.

Miss Garden's new role and her affection for it were not very difficult to shed the glitter and the gorgeousness of such gowns as she wears in Thais for the simple little rags of a beggar. Her answer came quickly and it was decisive. She said:

"Why, no; I never think for a minute of that side of the role. I love beautiful things off the stage, and I enjoy thoroughly my own gowns and jewels, but what I wear in a role is something which has only to do with a part, and not with me. Indeed, I shall find infinitely more pleasure in getting into the togs for Jean than into the gowns for Thais, because to divulge a little secret, I like the part much better, and as Massenet wrote them both, I think I am not doing anyone an injustice in saying so."

"From what do you draw your picture, Miss Garden? Is it from life, from reading or from imagination?"

Miss Garden's answer came in the nature of a surprise. She said: "Not at all. I only respond to the music, involuntarily, if you will, but invariably. The music calls out certain thoughts, certain movements, and I neither see nor hear; I simply respond. I sometimes think that if there were no book, no explanations of any kind, I would still respond in the same manner and the same spirit. It depends entirely upon the composer how much he gets out of me. Take, for instance, the role of Melisande—where would I find anything upon which to model the part? She is a ditty something which existed in Debussy's mind. She was real enough for him to have expressed her in music. His expression of her was powerful enough for me to have caught her elusive, ethereal and evasive as she is. I get the same effect every time, and always something new which I did not get before. This is more difficult, or rather more unreliable. At one time it calls out one thing and at another something else, because as a whole there is less subtlety in the music and in the course of time, after I shall have exhausted all there is in it for me, it will cease to have any drawing powers upon me."

I then asked Miss Garden whether she meant to convey that she works purely under inspiration. She said:

"No; this is not inspiration at all. It is something more tangible. I will grant inspiration to the man who writes the music, or the book, or both. The inspiration which I get from it would only prepare me to receive the message, but it would not do the work. That is physical, and so physical that it is a matter of responding to the rhythms with every portion of my body. The music fairly gets into my bones and sinews. It becomes a part of me, and unless it affects me so there is no use for me to try to do a part."

"What would you do in the event that the book and music were a misfit?"

"That means failure for me," answered Miss Garden, with conviction. "I cannot struggle against that, because I am the keenest sufferer. You see, I am always conscious of self-criticism, and I watch myself very closely while I am doing a part. At every performance I find myself saying: 'That is good, I shall do this each time,' or, 'That is horrible; I will never do it again; therefore, living with the part as much as I do, it would have to be congenial or I could not endure it.'"

Then Miss Garden took her congenial little Jean for a drive in her beautiful limousine car through Central Park.

The great musical event of the week was the arrival and the debut of Mischa Elman, who is one of the most remarkable artists ever presented to an American public. Elman is young, very

young in fact; but what he does with that violin in the manner in which he sways his audience, he might be 20 instead of 20. His maturity extends beyond his music, and he is as different from a boy of 20 as he is different from the average artist of 20, even a good artist.

There is little doubt that Elman will be the great sensation of the violinists in America this season, and it is safe to say that many years have passed since a similar genius has been given to us.

Through the great length of the Tschalkowsky violin concerto Elman held the vast audience at Carnegie Hall enthralled, and at the close of his performance the people seemed too dazed to burst into immediate applause; but after they recovered the house rang with cries of "Bravo!" and with applause that was fairly deafening. After the second number on the programme, Wieniawski's "Souvenir de Moscow," it was even greater because this is essentially a piece for the people, and it is well known. Measuring Elman by the greatest who have played it, the young Russian covered himself with greater laurels than ever. It was one of the most sensational events of many seasons, and if I mistake not Elman will sweep the country as no young artist has done since the first blaze of Kubelik; and Elman has what Kubelik never had, wonderful temperament and magnetism, more power and a wider sweep.

Elman is booked for an enormous number of concerts in New York, including seven to be given Sunday nights at the Manhattan Opera-House. His first recital will be given December 17 at Carnegie Hall, and according to the way in which the fair sex gave themselves over to his charms we may expect the storming of the Carnegie platform at the end of the recital. His debut was made as soloist with the Russian Symphony Orchestra, in an entirely Russian programme.

Saturday Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Fleischner, of Portland, Or., and Miss Flora Fleischner sailed for Europe, where they will remain for a year. While in the musical centers Miss Fleischner will continue her vocal studies. She has a voice of unusual beauty, which has been the subject of much admiration in New York during her stay here.

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