

MELBA DISCOURAGES THOSE WHO WOULD SEEK HONORS ON THE OPERATIC STAGE

Wholesale Rush Is Dreadful for the Stage and Dreadful for the Singers, Says Diva.

NEW YORK, Jan. 23.—(Special Correspondence.)—Mme. Melba has a good fellow in her own rooms. Thus I found her when I called at the Plaza Hotel before she sailed. The great prima donna was just preparing to enjoy what so many declare to be the acme of all that is entrancing. She opened her door to two talking machines—the one was a phonograph, the other was yours truly. On the phonograph she was to hear some new records which she had just made and which were sent to her for approval.

As far as the other talking machine is concerned, it must be said that Mme. Melba said a few things herself, nor did she wait for questions, indeed, she said that she was glad to have the chance to tell all students, and every one interested, what she thought of the present conditions as she believed there was much room for improvement.

Mme. Melba expressed pleasure at the strides made by the operatic audiences of New York, and when asked to make some suggestions for the benefit of those studying for her own profession, she said:

"I am afraid I should not be very encouraging, and I certainly should not say the things which they want to hear. It would be like Punch on the subject of marriage—don't. I don't believe in this wholesale rush for the operatic stage. I think it is dreadful for the stage and dreadful for the singers. The teachers are to blame for much of the trouble of the present time."

"What do you consider the trouble?"

"A lack of great artists, of course," replied the singer with a conviction that seemed indisputable. "There are so many people of the fairly good type that they choke out those who really have talent. Talent is not the word—in fact, it is talent that makes all the trouble. A girl or boy should have genius before the operatic stage should be considered, and most of them have nothing but talent."

Mme. Melba said that no one should study for the stage with that as a definite specific purpose from the start, because even keeping that in mind distracted the attention from the things which were necessary for success.

"The training of an opera singer should begin when he or she is yet a baby. It should begin with a general musical education, in which self and vanity have no part. No matter what the future may bring, the matter of the piano and of music in general should be the foundation. This idea that music means one thing for the study of the voice and another for the study of an instrument is perfect folly. No one ever thought about a voice for me. I was practicing the piano at 6 in the morning. I had my studies in harmony, and my school absorbed much of my time. But the noon hour belonged to me, and instead of spending it at lunch or in recreation, I stole away to a little church where someone allowed me to practice the pipe organ unknown to any of my family, who were paying right along for those lunches which were never eaten."

"After the afternoon session of school was over I went home, and then the rest of the time was spent with my violin. Singing was the last thing that any one thought about, and if I attempted it about the house I was repressed with little ceremony. But I hummed and hummed, and I guess that was what brought my voice into place."

"The trouble is," continued Mme. Melba, "that people are afraid to tell the truth and afraid to hear it. When a pupil asks a teacher for advice, he knows that to tell the truth would cost him a



MME. MELBA, WHO DISCOURAGES ASPIRANTS FOR OPERATIC STAGE.

pupil, and the pupil has not the courage to hear the truth and still go on studying. They can't study too much. Everyone should study, but whether everyone alive should study for the public is another question. No person should ever ask a teacher whether he has sufficient voice to make a career. The teacher wants a new pupil, and everything is grist which comes to his mill.

"A more serious trouble exists when people ask artists whether they should go on the stage. The artist does not want to become unpopular. Why should he? And he, too, encourages a would-be opera singer to work for an object which he knows will never be attained. At the very best the struggle is hard enough, but when all the hardships and privations are to end in a non-success, I say it is charity to say so from the start."

"Do you think a student will find more abroad than he will here?" was the next question that seemed important to ask this woman, who seemed frank enough to say just what she thought, whether it was likely to hurt or not.

"No, I do not. I think you must have some excellent teachers here, and as I stated emphatically at the outset, the success does not lie within reach of those who figure upon spending three or four

years abroad after the real study years are over. Childhood is the time for study, and home is the place for study. I do not say that a few years in foreign countries would not improve a singer vastly, just as it would improve them from the other side to come over here and get some things which would do them good, but for study, the real thing, the thing which makes a big art, does not depend upon one teacher or upon one line of study."

"And I will say, as far as women are concerned, if they have not the physique of a Hercules, let them stay out of the operatic world, no matter how beautifully they may be equipped in every other way, because the strain of a public life is almost greater than any woman is able to bear."

Mme. Melba said that she was devoted to the songs of Debussy and loved modern music, but that Strauss was an arch-enemy of the deepest dye to the singer. "Wagner? Why Wagner was nothing by the side of him. His music is very attractive and very fascinating when you only think about the instrumental side, but when you think that he cares for nothing except to tear a throat of a singer's organization to shreds it seems more

indecent than some of his music; now, does it not?"

Before leaving the question of opera singers, I want to correct an erroneous piece of press matter that seems to be going the rounds, to the effect that Massenet resented Mary Garden's appearance in "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame," which story appeared in a recent issue of The Oregonian as also in several Eastern papers. There is absolutely no truth in one word of the story circulated, as Massenet himself was delighted that Miss Garden would undertake it and offered to make any changes that the part might need. However, in point of the fact that Massenet has just sent a cable conveying hearty thanks and appreciation to Mr. Hammerstein for giving him such superb presentations of "Thais" and "Le Jongleur" it does not look as though the French composer were very much aggrieved.

But Mary Garden was aggrieved, and for a short time it looked as though Mr. Hammerstein was to lose one of the greatest assets of his house. Mr. Hammerstein has tried the "guest" artists several times, and has seemed to work fairly well, taking Melba as example. On this basis Mr. Hammerstein engaged Mme. Cavalleri for a few performances, but one of these he announced as being "Thais" which Miss Garden resented. This resentment grew so strong that Miss Garden sent in her resignation practically upon the eve of the production of "Salome." It is needless to state that Miss Garden had her way. Mme. Cavalleri was removed from the cast and all is serene. However, when it comes to fortune, Miss Garden must be placed at the head of the list. She sang "Thais" Friday night, "Mellande" Saturday night, "Mellande" again Monday night and attended all the rehearsals for "Salome" which will be produced Thursday night. EMMILIE FRANCES BAUER.

ONE RIGHT STILL KEPT

Duchess of Marlborough Discovers Some Things About Women.

LONDON, Feb. 6.—(Special.)—The Duchess of Marlborough is apparently shaping towards active participation in the suffragette movement. She is contributing a series of papers on the position of women through the ages to a magazine which shows a careful study of authorities, it is unilluminated by any original thought. She describes how in certain aboriginal tribes descent was always in former times through the mother. "As a natural consequence," she says, "laws of rank and property follow the strictest maternal type, and women had in some cases the right to dismiss their husbands, keeping the children to succeed themselves, and be members of their own clan." By all accounts the maternal privilege claimed here of "dismissing" husbands and keeping the children, is still a sturdy survival in connection with some quite recent marriages.

GIRL MOSTLY SCAR TISSUE

French Criminal Bears 26 Stab Wounds and Is Minus One Eye.

PARIS, Feb. 6.—(Special.)—Chiffonette, the girl who was arrested some time ago, and who, besides an eye gouged out, had the marks of 26 stabs on her body, was brought up for trial in the Seine Assize Court, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment for having stabbed her rival to death. This is the second killing of which she was accused. The charges read against her were almost incredible, when one thinks of the strenuous struggles which she has survived. The presiding judge read out the following list of her exploits:

"You are a female Apache. You plunged in you by your lover, and the revolver. How you survived this is also a wonder is that you survived. Last year you were shot at by a man who was your lover. Two years ago a dagger was

plunged in you by your lover, and the revolver. How you survived this is also a wonder is that you survived. Last year you were shot at by a man who was your lover. Two years ago a dagger was

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Mr. Portland Business Man, Portland, Or.

Dear Sir:—This letter is written to you, Messrs. Meier & Frank, Olds, Wortman & King, Lipman & Wolfe, Wadhams & Kerr Bros., Allen & Lewis, Tull & Gibbs, Clossett & Devers, Honeyman Hardware Co., and the rest of you who are helping to make Portland the commercial metropolis of the West.

It is an advertisement and we know that everyone of you will read it through with interest, for you are all thorough believers in advertising. You would not be good business men if you were not, for publicity has helped put you where you are today, in the forefront of the procession. It has helped make your names and your products household words.

If at any time you are doubtful as to the value of advertising, just begin figuring what you would take for the value of your firm name, or substitute other names for such well-known brands as "Monopole," "Golden West," "Wadco." Ask Mr. Powers to drop the expression "Dignified credit" from his advertisements, or suggest that he have a flock of turkeys or chickens in place of his well-known geese, which walk solemnly across the advertising pages of the city papers and across every billboard.

If you are still doubtful as to the value of printer's ink, find out how much it will cost you to purchase the name "Ivory Soap," "Arm and Hammer Brand Soda," or "Twenty-Mule Borax." These firms may have only spent thousands of dollars in imposing these names on the public, yet they would not take hundreds of thousands of dollars for them today, for they have the public so well educated that a customer almost unconsciously asks for the well-known and widely advertised brands when he goes to purchase his goods.

Advertising, you say, is an economic waste. Well, maybe it is,

but which one of you is willing to drop it entirely? And how long would it take the other fellow in your line to get your business?

Do you ever think of the days when you were a bare-footed, freckle-faced, tow-headed youngster of ten and took your lunch to the little schoolhouse at the crossroads in a five-pound lard pail? Do you remember how proud you were when you spelled all the rest down or stood at the head of the class in mental arithmetic? If you do, here is a problem in mental arithmetic for you. We hope you will answer it so that you can go to the head of the class. Add energy to merit, ability and fair dealing. Multiply the result by judicious local publicity, and what is the result? Now multiply this by publicity in a magazine of general circulation—and this means the Pacific Monthly of course—and what is the result? We don't need to give the answer to this problem, for you all know that the result is a National demand, a satisfactory balance in the bank, and success with a capital "S."

Elgin Watches, Cream of Wheat and every other article which are now household words throughout the United States, at one time were only known locally.

When it comes down to basic facts, advertising is merely a matter of dollars and cents. You are not going to advertise in any medium knowingly unless you receive good returns, for advertising is like any other investment, and you want to show a profit on every dollar you invest. We want you to consider The Pacific Monthly on this basis, and to bring to your attention one or two facts that will prove conclusively that we can make good along this line.

First, The Pacific Monthly, being published in Portland, has an extensive circulation throughout the Coast and Northwestern States. It has a place in the hearts of the Western people not occupied by any Eastern magazine, for the people of the West are loyal to

Western institutions, particularly to The Pacific Monthly, for they realize how large a share it has had in familiarizing the Eastern and Middle Western public with Portland and Oregon.

By building up a magazine such as The Pacific Monthly now is, we have been able to interest the big Eastern manufacturers whose goods many of you are selling. They are using liberal space with us. This advertising cannot fail to influence buyers throughout the Western country, and you will be benefited by the demand created for these goods.

The whole question resolves itself into, "How can you secure the greatest amount of good for yourself from this Eastern advertising? How can YOU reap the benefit of the thousands of dollars being spent by the Eastern manufacturer?"

We have the circulation, both as to quality and quantity, and we want to demonstrate to you that we can increase your sales by telling the public that you are handling the widely advertised articles. Will you, as a matter of fairness to yourself and The Pacific Monthly, have your advertising manager prepare an ad and key it so as to trace results, and use space in the March or April Pacific Monthly?

Within the next year there will be thousands of new families settle in the West. Why not start them out right by having them use your goods? We will help to start them coming your way; then it is up to you to treat them in such a manner that they will continue to come.

This is a personal letter to each and every one of you, and if you have any legitimate excuse for not using The Pacific Monthly, we would be glad to have you write us. If you have no legitimate excuse, send in your copy at your earliest convenience and we will do our part to make your investment profitable.

Yours for the upbuilding of the West.

THE PACIFIC MONTHLY COMPANY