

Dramatic and Musical Events From a Woman's Standpoint

Edited by MRS. WARREN THOMAS

Looking back over the musical season and forward to what is to come, we must pronounce it good. Pianists have been helped and inspired by the intelligent musicianship of Harold Bauer, and lovers of the human voice have listened with delight to the charming vocalism of Lillian Blauvelt and with unbounded enthusiasm to the wonderful art of Schumann-Heink. To have had this artist alone would have given us something to hold in remembrance for many a day.

And now we are to have the added joy of hearing one of the most delightful artists of the day, Marcelle Sembrich. The charm of her personality added to her marvelous art has brought New York audiences to her feet. She has been known to respond to as many as 15 recalls, after a concert number, so great is their love for her and appreciation of her. One of the most pleasant memories of a recent New York opera season enjoyed by the writer is of this delightful artist.

AN ALASKA INDIAN'S FEEL VOICE. In the quartet which sang behind the scenes in "The American" last week was a deep bass voice which caused many to wonder as to whom it might belong. Few knew that it was the voice of Charles Cutter, a full-blooded Indian of an Alaska tribe. His story is an interesting one. Born at Shakon, on the southern coast, he lived for years the roving life of his people. He finally entered a mission school at Sitka, where he acquired the foundation of an English education. He learned enough to spell him forever for the camp life and to give him a thirst for more knowledge. A Chemawa student came to the Sitka school and organized a small band, teaching the boys the uses of the different instruments. It was in this way that Charles received his first musical education, learning the notes and to play the cornet a little. Even this small attempt at band music aroused his unbounded enthusiasm. He wanted to hear a real band. Even yet his eyes glitten when he speaks of it. So this desire, coupled with his ambition for future education, brought him to Chemawa, where he remained three years. In speaking of Chemawa, he refers with enthusiasm to the debating society, which he says he enjoyed the best of all his work there. It was during the Chautauque session of 1902 that Mr.

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took the advice of my friends and gave up the violin and piano. I studied first under Hans Reikhtansky, who was then a bass in the Imperial opera house in Vienna and a teacher in the conservatory. But I soon went to Milan and began my studies there under Lamperti. I studied for several years with Lamperti, and then came the question of a debut. I wanted to sing in Italian, of course, and that was impossible for an unknown singer in Germany. The impresario of the Italian opera at Athens was in Milan at the time that I thought of a debut. He heard me sing at Lamperti's studio, and we decided that Athens would be the place for my debut. So I made my first appearance as Elvira in "I Puritani." I sang for a short time, and among my other roles was Lucia. But I retired for nearly two years after that time. I was still so young that there was plenty of time to complete my education in a way that should be satisfactory to me and my teacher. So I went to Dresden and when I sang again it was in the Royal opera house.

MEMORIE IS A MUSICAL GENIUS. "How do I come to be so musical?" is a question that I hear constantly during my travels. It always provokes a smile, because I can never answer it quite satisfactorily. I think in my case it must be hereditary. I can explain it in no other way. I might possibly have studied quite as long as I did and quite as hard without results, if I had not inherited a talent for music from my father. He was a music teacher in Wisniowoyak. He taught the piano, violin, clarinet and organ. He taught them all well, too, although he had never had a music lesson from anybody in his life. His name was Kochanska, which was my family name. But I took Sembrich, my mother's maiden name, when I went on the stage. There were too many "ks" in Kochanska for a prima donna. For the same reason I took my middle name, Marceline, in place of Faxed, which would not have been so easy for people outside of my own Galicia to pronounce. So I finally became Marcelle Sembrich. But that was a long time after I began to study music. "Indeed, I can scarcely remember the time that I was not studying music. At 5 I was playing the piano. At 6 I took up the violin. I never thought of singing. Ours was a musical family, but I had never produced singers. All our talents seemed to be instrumental. "When I was 11 years old my father had taught me all he knew about the piano. After a family consultation it was decided that I should go to Leinburg and study there under a well known teacher of the piano. He was a young man named Wilhelm Stengel. Nobody ever thought that he would afterward become my husband. But I was too

MADAME SEMBRICH. Boyer discovered his voice and immediately made plans for him to come to Portland, securing a position for him as organist, which trade he had learned at Chemawa. Since that time he has pursued his musical studies and has made remarkable progress. He is a member of Mr. Boyer's choir and chorus, singing the most difficult music with ease and intelligence. He sang in the chorus of "Fatinitza" and "The American" and enjoyed these experiences immensely. A student, serious-minded and earnest, he commands the respect of all who know him.

MISS STRAUSS. A Cincinnati girl has achieved one of the successes of the musical season of 1914. She is Miss Jessie Strauss, who on April 3, made her appearance with Sousa's band at the Metropolitan opera house in New York. There were a number of applicants for the position, but Miss Strauss captured the prize. Since taking up the violin, Miss Strauss has studied during the past 12 years with but one teacher, Mr. Adolph Zahn, first violinist in the Cincinnati Symphony orchestra. She is a professed violinist, and she has heard Sousa being cast around for a violin soloist, arranged for Miss Strauss to play before the "March King" when he was in Cincinnati last October during the fall festival. Sousa was delighted with her work, and at once engaged her for the season of 1914. The photograph is loaned by a member of the Women's club, to whom the young lady's father, Mr. John Strauss, sent the same.

MISS LOIS STEARS. Miss Lois Stears, the successful impresario, talks entertainingly of her experiences. One of the most pleasant features of her work is the opportunity for knowing the personal side of the artists she represents. She has traveled over the concert route of the northwest managing the business matters of the tour with most of the artists who have appeared under her management, including Bauer, de Lussan, the Spering quartet, Gabriilowitch, Nordica, the Duss orchestra and Schumann-Heink, and she will do the same with Sembrich, soon to appear in the same cities. It will be remembered that she accompanied Nordica on her invitation to California, and the pleasant memories of this delightful artist are not effaced even by the more recent experience of a trip to Sitka with Schumann-Heink, though Miss Stears is more than enthusiastic over Schumann-Heink. She says "Schumann-Heink has the most genuinely wholesome, the most dignified and the sweetest personality I have ever come in contact with. It was a delight to be with her and a real sorrow to have to leave her."

MISS STRAUSS. young then to think of husbands of any kind. I was a child that had to be sent away from her family to study, and all he thought of was the easiest and best way to give me the opportunities my father thought I needed. Lemberg was selected as the best place, and Herr Stengel was the best teacher for me. My father took me to Lemberg and introduced me to the teacher he had selected. I played for him, and he consented to take me for a pupil. I hoped some day to be a great pianist, or if not that, a teacher possibly. The last future possible seemed to me the life of a prima donna.

After I had been in Lemberg a year it is not modest to tell this, but I must—the pupil knew almost as much as the teacher. Wilhelm wrote to my father that he had taught me all he knew. He recommended Epstein of Vienna to my father, and went there to see Professor Epstein. He heard me play and I soon became one of his pupils. There I remained for three years. I had never given up the violin, although I intended to make the piano my specialty. Two years after I went to Epstein I discovered that I had a voice,

they want to be amused, and musical comedy fills the want. Going to the theatre, the demand is for the serious play, the inclination being even toward the religious play. Students attend every day at all and any of the lighter plays, in a class between these extremes, that have succeeded have done so through the personality of some star, "Harriette Hononym" being a case in point.

PACIFIC COAST AS MUSIC LOVERS. Mrs. Raymond Brown of New York writes her impressions of Pacific coast audiences.

Giving one's impression of musical conditions on the Pacific coast after a brief concert trip there, reminds one of the impressions of America which so many foreigners feel impelled to write after a first visit to this country when they have spent a few weeks here. In this respect, New York is as much a "foreign land" to those who have been to the Pacific coast as the Pacific coast is to those who have been to New York. The New York audience is disposed to be friendly, easily won and exceedingly enthusiastic, even if it is not the best in the world. The audience is so prevalent and so unbearable, I am always curious to hear what people say of us, both individually and as a nation—and there is a freshness in the viewpoint as a result. There is a keen eagerness of vision which gives certain results which a longer contact dulls.

POPULAR MINE GARDNER. We are being particularly favored by the presence in our midst of a more than ordinarily good stock company. Has Portland realized this fact? There are several members of this Neil-Morris company who are real "select" lights, but just now our interest centers in the leading woman, Miss Amelia Gardner, who has made more friends here than she knows of, not only by the charm and spontaneity of her art, but by the genuine wholesomeness and magnetism of her mere presence.

AMELIA GARDNER. She is a Pennsylvania, her home being in Pittsburg. She tells the story of her call to the stage very simply. "I had never thought of the stage as a profession—in fact, knew very little of the theatre, having not been allowed to go to the theatre, as a child. My father was a merchant, and when he failed, I had to leave home. I was then 11 years old. Pittsburg, persuaded me to study elocution, though I insisted I had no talent in that direction. I went out with a small concert company and drifted to New York, where I secured a very engaging teacher, much against the wish of my family."

For the past four years she has done stock work, except for a short engagement with Faversham at the beginning of the season. "How do you make a part yours?" was asked her. "Well, I study the play, first of all, to find the author's conception of the character; then I try to fit my personality to the part. If I succeed in doing that, I make the part fit my personality. You know personality is the great thing in these days. The great successes of the day are those of personality. Maude Adams, Mary Mansering, are cases in point. I like to feel myself the character; in fact, I can't not a role that I do not feel. It is as if I were living the life of those people as yours. To make them laugh or weep, or to throbb with every heartbeat of your own. Oh, it is splendid. I mean of the Italian."

One of Miss Gardner's greatest successes was in "Bowing the Wind," which she played on this coast six years ago. She is also fond of the part of Renie de Cochefort, in "Under the Red Robe." Miss Gardner will not appear again during the Portland engagement, with the company, as she has been compelled to undergo an operation for her knee, which has given her so much trouble during the past few weeks. She expects to rejoin the company for the San Francisco engagement, and the cordial good wishes of many Portland friends will follow her, wherever she may go.

MUSICAL NOTES. Mrs. Shanna Cumming scored a big success in New York April 11 by her singing of the soprano role in Max Bruch's cantata, "The Cuckoo of Fire." The work was given by the People's Choral Union, with a chorus of 700, under the direction of Frank Damrosch. The last performance of "Parafial" was given April 23 at the Metropolitan opera house, as a benefit for Mr. Conrad. A souvenir program containing portraits of all the members of the company was published to celebrate the occasion.

THE MAY FESTIVAL OF THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY Choral association will be held in Salem May 17, 18 and 19. Mr. Frances Bentley of Salem is director and the soloists will be Mrs. Rose Bloch-Bauer, Professor Drew of Salem, Mr. J. W. Belcher and Mr. I. M. Gien of Eugene. The works to be presented are "Miriam's Song of Triumph," "The Lay of the Bell," "Ad-

Williametan" and Buck's "The Golden Legend." One of the pleasant features of the recent production of "Mary of Magdala" in this city was the artistic attention to detail. The music between the acts was of a serious nature, in keeping with the dramatic action, and for the incidental music several themes of "Parafial" were most appropriately used.

The many really accomplished artists there. Portland stands unique in the far west, or whether it is older than its sister cities, or whether it has a larger number of people of leisure and wealth, able to travel and hear more, and to devote more time themselves to art, for some reason it seems more musical than any city of the coast, reminding one of Boston in its earnestness and discrimination. The work of the Musical club has undoubtedly been a large factor in educating the public of that city. For while the higher education as a study and supporting artists' recitals, both are a necessary part of the life of a musical club which would be a vital factor in the lives of its members and their city.

MUSIC AND THE HIGHER EDUCATION AS FOUNDED ON THE PACIFIC COAST AS IN THE EASTERN STATES. We are just awakening to the fact that our colleges and universities training takes no cognizance of the importance of music in education. Men and women come out from our universities by the thousands so ignorant of music and musical literature that it would be laughable were it not lamentable. The man often marries a woman who has musical training in her profession, and she either gives up her art, or else goes on her weary musical way alone, without the joy and sympathy of her mate, while all his life he misses one of the greatest pleasures given to a weary mortal. The man engaged in the struggle for wealth and position needs this uplifting, joy-giving art. Even more than the woman, he needs it as a leaven in his materialistic life. The music which is the training of the student years leave it stupidly alone.

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