

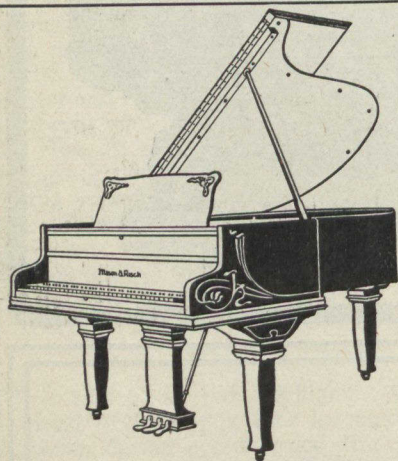


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## MUSIC AND DRAMA

AT a recent meeting of the Clef Club of Winnipeg, Mr. P. B. C. Turner read a stimulating paper on "Musical Criticism" which is published in "Town Topics"—which, by the way, is quite different from the new York publication of that name. The writer shows himself entirely unconventional and fearless, while the following remarks on newspaper criticism of music will be read with rejoicing by many citizens.

"When, as so often happens, the press criticisms of musical performances are assigned to youngsters who may happen to have a liking for the subject, or to disappointed musicians temporarily out of a job; or to some would-be musical has-been who heard things when he was a boy, and who repeats the statement so often that we half believe it is true; or to some prejudiced dyspeptic who has learned the art of word-juggling from meeting musical people, reading musical magazines, and in whose mind only two classes of musicians exist—the friends of the critic and their rivals—such criticisms have materially lowered the influence of the press."

The writer has evidently come across a few critics of the rough-and-ready order. His further remark relative to Winnipeg is of general interest: "A newspaper man recently told me that our papers devote more space to 'Music and Drama' than is to be found in any city of its size on the American continent. If this be true, I regard it not as a sign of health, but of disease."

There is little doubt that Winnipeg is destined to be a larger city than either Montreal or Toronto. Hence, the present attention paid by the press to music and drama would indicate that Winnipeg has rapidly acquired the means for gratifying the demands for such entertainment. While all his hearers may not have agreed with Mr. Turner's condemnation of such lavish notice of music and drama, his frankly-expressed opinion is decidedly a welcome novelty in this age of platitudinous papers.

\* \* \*

THE crowds which attended "The School for Scandal" at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Toronto, during the last week, proved that the old comedies have by no means lost their charm. So remarkable was the attendance that there will probably be a repetition of the performance before the season closes. It would be a pleasure to many to have a revival of "She Stoops to Conquer" and "The Good-Natured Man." Miss Ida Conquest, whose first "Alexandran" appearance takes place next Monday night, would make a charming "Kate Hardcastle."

\* \* \*

SAN FRANCISCO is jubilant because it now has the opportunity to sit up and say to New York: "I told you so." Some time ago, before the City of the Golden Gate was a sufferer from earthquake disturbance, Madame Tetrazzini, who happened to be near the western coast, paused at San Francisco and sang to thousands of Californians who straightway went into raptures of eulogy and were scoffed at by far-away New Yorkers who chose to consider this enthusiasm the untutored exuberance of a youthful people. But now that London has "discovered" Madame Tetrazzini and has fairly lost its sober British head, New York has developed a desire to hear this wonderful prima donna and has offered a magnificent salary to the lady of the Latin name. It is San Francisco's hour of triumph and she is enjoying it to the full.

\* \* \*

IT is said that Mr. Warfield, who has made a popular hit in the character of "Wes' Bigelow" in "A Grand Army Man," is to play in Canada this winter. Mr. Warfield's career has been one of tremendous work since the days when, as a San Francisco newsboy, he saved his pennies that he might have a seat in the gallery and see the performance of a favourite actor. He is now recognised as an artist, as the first among actors in emotional "domestic-comedy."

\* \* \*

MISS ABBIE MAY HELMER, a well-known pianiste, who was for some years a pupil of Mr. W. O. Forsyth of Toronto, has lately given recitals in Western cities and was especially successful in the impression produced at the Women's Musical Club in Winnipeg. Miss Lottie Jolley, a pupil of Mr. Owen Smily, is another talented Ontario girl who has found favour with a Winnipeg audience, her rendering of Whitcomb Riley's poems at a City Band concert, recently held in the Walker Theatre, being highly praised by local critics.

\* \* \*

THE public lectures and recitals at the Margaret Eaton School of Expression, Toronto, are proving highly attractive. Principal Hutton's lecture on "Antigone" was delivered the week before Christmas and this Thursday Captain Scott-Harden gives "A Vision of the East."

\* \* \*

"BESIDE the Bonnie Brier Bush" seems in a fair way to become a stock play in Canada. It has lately been enlivening western cities where "Posty" and the fair "Flora" have elicited much admiration. As a drama, it is a rather irritating piece of patchwork to those who are familiar with the original material. But it is a harmless bit of kailyard comedy which is sure to appeal to a Scottish-Canadian settlement.

\* \* \*

NEXT month will see the second competition for His Excellency's trophies. The entries of musical and dramatic societies from Quebec, Winnipeg and other cities assure the promoters of the general interest aroused by a recurrence of this event. Quebec carried off the musical trophy last year and Winnipeg came first in dramatic contest. The Maritime Provinces will probably be well represented. There is no mention of Newfoundland yet but it is to be hoped that the Ancient Colony will send a company again, as the visit of the Boys' Band last year proved decidedly interesting.

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