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MUSIC AND DRAMA

THE reputation of Toronto as a musical centre has undoubtedly been enhanced by the recent visit of the Sheffield Choir, assisted by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The Mendelssohn Choir has been the inspiration of many musical organisations, and amongst these the To-



Mr. H. C. Cox, President Toronto Symphony Orchestra Committee.

ronto Symphony Orchestra holds an interesting and not unimportant place. It has for many years been the dream of music-lovers that Toronto should have a symphony orchestra of its own similar to the great orchestras which have achieved reputation in the old land and in the new. While several attempts were made from time to time, the real start in the direction of securing such an organisation occurred two years ago when the Toronto Conservatory of Music appointed Mr. Frank S. Welsman as conductor for what is now known as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Welsman took upon himself the extremely difficult task of forming an orchestra out of the material at hand, and gave to the work a whole-hearted enthusiasm which is more than ever apparent now that he has evolved a band of musicians of which Dr. Coward, the great English conductor, spoke in the highest terms of praise.

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra, arising from the earlier efforts of Dr. Edward Fisher, Musical Director of the Conservatory, and Mr. Welsman, has now become a separate organisation under the direction of a committee of public-spirited citizens who are anxious that Toronto should in the fulness of time have reason to be proud of its orchestra, and that in orchestral music it should ultimately reach the high standard set by the Mendelssohn Choir in choral work.

In every city where a symphony orchestra of this nature has its being, it has been found necessary for the citizens to provide a fund for its nurture and development, as, owing to the fact that chiefly professional players are employed, and that many unusual expenditures have to be met, it has been found impossible to depend upon the receipts from concerts if a high degree of efficiency is to be attained. Toronto has been particularly fortunate in securing a number of its citizens to give the Orchestra the financial backing so necessary to its success, and Mr. H. C. Cox, as chairman of the committee, has met with a great deal of encouragement in his efforts to bring the orchestra forward to a place of continental importance.

THE concert to be given in Massey Music Hall, Toronto, on December 8th by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, with Madame Galski as soloist, should be a highly popular event, as the public has realised the importance of the new musical organisation and is prepared to show its appreciation of the able and ambitious conductor.

* * *

WOODSTOCK now announces the first production of the "Burra Pundit," a light opera in three acts, to be given in the Opera House by the Woodstock Operatic Association on December 10th and 11th. Judging from the synopsis, Miss Margaret I. MacDonald and Miss Emma R. Steiner have done remarkably clever work with libretto and music. It is the intention of the Association to lease this opera in England and the United States and the encouragers of Canadian talent may wish the project all success. Miss Steiner is conductor of the orchestra and general director.

* * *

MISS ELEANOR ROBSON comes to the Princess Theatre, Toronto, next week in Richard Harding Davis' play, "Vera the Medium." Miss Robson, ever since the days of "Merely Mary Ann," has been so secure of a place in Toronto's favour that she will probably be greeted by a crowded house. Mr. Davis as a playwright is beginning to eclipse Richard Harding Davis of "Gallagher and Others." It is to be hoped that the report that the Savage-Molnar "Devil" is coming to the Princess Theatre for Christmas week is not true. Such a production is undesirable at any time, but for that particular season, is especially repellent.



Miss Eleanor Robson, at the Princess Theatre, Toronto, next week in "Vera the Medium."

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THIS afternoon, "Rob Roy" makes its appearance at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Toronto, to be followed by "Fantana," "Cavalleria Rusticana," "Pinafore," and "Jack and the Beanstalk," the last-named for Christmas week. There have been several changes in the Imperial Opera Company. Mr. Clarence Harvey has left for Philadelphia but there has been an accession of two valuable members—Mr. Jack Henderson, an "old boy" of Belleville, and Mr. William Sellery, whose home is the sturdy town of Kincardine. The latest arrivals have had successful careers in the United States and will doubtless prove most acceptable with Canadian audiences.