

BEFORE THE FOOTLIGHTS.

As a rule, we have no very favorable opinion of the dramatic or musical performances of amateurs, and our prejudice—if prejudice it is—is founded on two reasons—the usual mediocrity of such performances, and the injustice which they do to professionals who devote all their time, talents and toil to the duties of the stage. There are exceptions, however, to every rule, and we are pleased to be able to note a very remarkable exception in the delivery of "Jeanne D'Arc," a lyric drama, presented during the whole of last week at the Academy of Music. Barring a few reservations, which we shall not be so ungracious as to enumerate, it may be said generally that this representation was equal to that of many theatrical companies which we have had here, and superior to several others. The consequence was a brilliant artistic as well as financial success, upon which we congratulate the enterprising managers, Messrs. Prume and Lavallée.

Of the drama itself it is only necessary to say that it celebrates one of the sublimest, most romantic and most pathetic episodes in all history—the career of that Maid of Orleans whose name is a household word in every nation, and whose deeds have formed the theme of ideal grandeur for pen, pencil and chisel, during three hundred years. The present work of Jules Barbier is in verse, and, so far as we are able to judge, it is very creditably written, although the vogue which it enjoyed in Paris was owing more to the connection which its subject had with the present relations of France and Germany, than to its own intrinsic merits. We can quite understand that the thrilling dialogue between the Maid and Warwick in the last act was received with tempests of applause in Paris for over four hundred nights, because the lines applied as much to the Germany of to-day as to the England of the 15th century, and the Governor of Rouen was lost in the personality of Von Bismarck. But still the dramatic interest was maintained throughout, and the play was received with intelligent interest.

An additional attraction was the music which Gounod attached to several of the situations, very much after the manner of the Greek choruses, so far as we can reconstruct these. The composition was worthy of the illustrious author of "Faust." Indeed, the music throughout was delicious. The Coronation March is a magisterial work, and the Funeral March is full of originality, although simple in its effects. The Page's Ballad had a certain flavor of the 15th century about it, an echo of the troubadour's song. To hear such music fitly interpreted was indeed a treat, and worth of itself the evening's entertainment, especially to the hundreds who could only imperfectly follow the French lines. With such a conductor as M. Lavallée at the head of a large and well-balanced orchestra, and such an artist as M. Prume as *chef d'attaque*, it was to be presumed that something like genuine interpretation would be secured. And it was secured. In massed passages there was an occasional irregularity, but in the several beautiful *piano* passages, the effect was always enchanting, because there the strings of M. Prume's violin dominated, true as the heart of love and sweet as the cooings of pigeons in the cotes of Domremy. The choruses were also well sung, the only blemish in the vocal parts which struck us being a certain discord in the chants of the two saints.

As to the dramatic part of the entertainment, it may be said that nearly the whole burden fell upon Madame Prume, and it is only justice to add that she was fully equal to the task. A sweet face, a perfect form, beauty of gesture and enunciation, and an astonishing familiarity with stage usages, constitute Madame Prume an actress, and she needs only to enlarge her sphere in order to increase her successes. She was well supported by a very large cast, chief among whom was the lady who represented Agnes Sorel, the tenant of Beaute-sur-Marne, and the gentlemen who personified Jacques D'Arc, the King and several of the Cavaliers. The costumes were fine and all the stage effects presented much spectacular force.

After the experience of last week, we think Messrs. Lavallée and Prume, with their efficient stage manager, M. Genot, should form a regular company, retaining their best actors, the bulk of their orchestra, the pick of their choruses, and with these undertake a series of representations of French opera-comique or light opera. The repertoires of Boieldieu, Adam, Auber, Harold, to say nothing of more modern authors, lie open before them, and we feel certain that they would meet with great success among the English as well as the French population. *Le Postillon* or *La Dame Blanche* would be quite easy to mount, to be followed by *La Muette*, *Les Deux Journées*, *Les Prés aux Clercs*, *Le Brasseur de Preston*, *Fra Diavolo*, and others. The soprano is *trouvé* in Madame Prume. The only trouble would be to find a good serviceable tenor.

THE QUEEN'S HOTEL, TORONTO.

Some of the hotels of Toronto enhance its good repute with strangers, and none more so than the Queen's Hotel, for it stands first in the order of merit of all the hotels in the city, and has won for itself the name of the leading hotel in Canada. This hotel has been closely associated with the name of Captain Dick in its origin and progress, a name which is held in high esteem by the people of Toronto and through-

out Ontario, for his enterprise in shipbuilding, and in the establishing of steamboat traffic on Lake Ontario and the upper lakes, besides that his efforts for the development of the resources of the country, through the promotion of sundry railway schemes, have stamped him as one of the chief pioneers of the commercial and industrial progress of the Province. His energy, perseverance, ability and judgment were such that whatever he set his mind to accomplish became in time a realized success. In an eminent degree was this manifest in the establishment of the Queen's Hotel, which from small beginnings has, through gradual advance and steady prosperity, reached its present magnificent proportions.

The original design of the building was certainly not that of a first-class hotel, for it consisted of two or three dwelling houses, which were ultimately leased and combined to form that early Presbyterian institution, Knox College. On the removal of the college to other premises on Grosvenor street, Captain Dick was induced by some of his old Toronto friends to open a hotel in the college buildings, as the property was his own, and he had become a great favorite with the travelling portion of the community. Thus began the now popular, extensive and prosperous Queen's Hotel, which, since the death of Captain Dick, in November of 1874, has been, and still continues to be under the able management of Messrs. McGaw and Winnett, whose training and experience for many years, under the former proprietor, give a sure guarantee of the future prosperity of the establishment.

At first, there was only one centre block, which was gradually enlarged and extended. Then, as the demand for increased accommodation required, one wing after another was added, till now, in its completed form, the building has a frontage range of 220 feet, with garden at each end, giving a total frontage of 344 feet.

The centre portion of the hotel is four stories high, with a tower surmounting it, rising to a height of eighty-five feet. The balcony over the main entrance is to be lengthened to double the present range, and also widened to the outer edge of the sidewalk. This balcony is to be enclosed with glass, for the purpose of forming a conservatory of choice flowers and plants, thus enhancing the pleasure of the guests, and giving quite a luxurious aspect to the hall on the first floor. Another balcony will also be erected in front of the third story, and the whole arrangement, when completed, will largely contribute to the beauty of the structure and give it quite an imposing aspect. Besides the centre, there is an extensive wing on either side to the east and west—the latter of recent erection. These wings are not of the same altitude as the centre building, having only three stories and attics, but this diversity is pleasing in relieving the structure of any monotony of architectural outline.

The beautiful grounds, on each side, are laid out in accordance with a tasteful design in ornamental gardening. Croquet lawns minister to the amusement of the summer tourists, surrounding which there is a profusion of rich flower-pots, combined with statues, fountains, and grotto-like groupings of shrubbery, rocks, flowers and plants. A beautiful summer house, supplied with gas, also adorns the grounds and affords a cool retreat for the guests on warm summer evenings. The interior arrangements and equipments of the hotel are all that could be desired in relation to comfort, convenience and luxury, so that even the most fastidious taste could find no cause for complaint. Everywhere from the kitchen to the attic, throughout all the ramifications, is there evidence of harmony of design, good taste and sound judgment. The bedrooms, parlor, dining-room and all else, are richly furnished, and whilst there is even a sumptuousness in the draperies, carpets, bureaus, bedsteads, &c., of some of the suits of the apartments for families, there is nothing loud or gaudy. Rooms en suite with bath-rooms, &c., attached, are on every floor. In 1871 a suite of apartments was occupied by His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia. His Excellency the Earl of Dufferin, K. P. G., Governor General of Canada, and the Countess of Dufferin on the occasion of each visit to Toronto engaged apartments at the "Queen's." The commercial traveller and the aristocratic tourist alike can feel that there are here the aspects of home more than the glare and excitement habitually characteristic of some large hotels. For winter comfort there are double windows and steam pipes all over the house, and in every room there are fire-places and grates to afford, when desired by the guests, greater cheerfulness and warmth. On the various floors there are sundry bath rooms, closets, &c., and the arrangements on the ground floor, in sample rooms, sitting rooms, water closets, and barber shop, are unexcelled anywhere in our Dominion cities. A magnificent passenger elevator adds to the many comforts of its guests. Besides the public-billiard room, there is a private billiard-room held in reserve for special use when desired by any of the guests.

It is not our province to descant on the merits of the culinary department, but simply to say that the hotel is noted for the peculiar excellence of its cuisine. We have already referred to the new landlords, Messrs. McGaw and Winnett, and may only further add that the old reputation of the Queen's Hotel will be fully sustained through their careful supervision, enterprise and courteous manners.

BURLESQUE.

SHE HOOKED HIM.—Henry Archibald is a devoted fisherman, not that he ever catches much of anything, but still he likes to take his pole and line and go up along the St. Lawrence during the long, warm, lazy summer days and lay in the yellow sunshine and think what the old woman will say when she finds he has gone off without splitting any kindling. In this view of the case he yesterday got out his hooks and lines to look them over. He sat on the wash bench by the hydrant enjoying himself hugely when Mrs. Archibald came out and made him bring her a bucket of water.

While he was doing this she picked up a fine large bass hook to admire it and laid it down again with the line scattering out in the yard.

Henry discussed the situation in Europe a few minutes with Oxtoby who was digging garden on the other side of the fence, and then sat down again to the contemplation of his fishing tackle. Pretty soon he missed a hook.

"Mother," he shouted, "what 'nunder the sun did you do with my bass hook?"

"Bother your old bass hook," said Mrs. Archibald, and she slapped the stove damper shut with emphasis; "you've swallowed it, I reckon."

"You had it a minute ago; you know you did. If a woman ever gets her hands on a fellow's things he never knows where they are any more."

Mrs. A. came to the door and looked around acidly:

"What d'ye call this here?" and picking up the end of the line she gave it a wrathful jerk.

"Whoop! ouch!! gosh!!! shoot the 'fernal dog," yelled Henry; and he waltzed frantically around nursing his hip pocket as tenderly as though he had a live coal in it.

"Sake's alive! what's the matter with the man?" and she gave the line another twitch.

"Found your old hook, have you?"

"Found it, you brimstone old torment; don't you see I've found it. Leggo! leggo that line, I tell you, afore I pulverise you."

"Now, Henry, I'd make a fuss if I were you."

"Fuss the blazes. I wish you knowed how it feels to have a fish-hook jerked through your heart."

"Well, you had no business to set down on your heart, with fish-hooks a-layin' all around."

"Don't be a fool now, will you; but just pull this thing out, before it turns to lock-jaw."

"It'd take a whole barrel of fish-hooks to lock your jaw. Come, give us a hold here."

But the first pull she made brought a Comanche squawk from Henry, and then she amputated the adjacent cloth and got the butcher knife, whereupon Henry straightened himself up viciously—

"Look here, woman, I ain't no blamed old ham; you don't slice me with that thing now, and don't you forget it. You just bounce that gal around for the doctor suddenly, and you'd better get down on your marrow bones and pray for me to recover afore I get mad too."

The doctor came, cut off the shank and pulled out the hook in half a minute, and all the rest of the day Henry sat on a flax seed poultice and one side of a chair, calling people up to the front window to ask them what was good for a "bile" on the knee.

METCALF'S HOUSE.—The old man's responsibilities were increasing—that is, his family were getting quite numerous, and he thought to himself how nice it would be to have a little house of his own, where he could wiggle his fingers and play a defiant tune on his nose at avaricious landlords. Mrs. Met. was much pleased at the idea, and said she always wanted a house built just as she wanted it.

She wanted a closet in each room, she said, and bay windows on the piazza side, and several little et ceteras that had been suggested to her mind from time to time during her struggles with rented houses.

"Let me see," said the old man, as the family gathered around the fireside one evening, "how had we best arrange the house? My idea would be a cosy little cottage, with lattice-work over the doors and clambering up the sides."

"But what's the carpenter to do with the vines?" chirruped a young Metcalf.

"And how can a cozy little cottage hold all this family?" queried another.

"Lattice work is so common," broke in another.

"No love in a cottage for me!" said Mrs. Metcalf when all the children had their say.

"I want a house with bay windows like Mr. Joneses, and what's more I'm going to have it my way."

"All right, go ahead, have it your way. You'll want a Mansard roof on it, and a brownstone front, and a closet in each room, and marble mantels, and silver hinges, and the devil knows what all. Go ahead, have it your own way, but just as sure as my name's Bill Metcalf, I'll not pay a continental red towards having it built," and the old man threw down his newspaper and stalked about the room like one possessed.

"Well, now, Mr. Smarty, let's hear what sort of a trap you want to live in. I'll bet it's some outlandish, old-fashioned barn."

"Don't make any difference what I want, Mrs. Metcalf, if it doesn't suit your ideas of a grand palatial mansion, of course you'll growl

and grumble about it the balance of your days." "That's just like you, you old man; nobody's got any sense but you. I guess I've got a say-so about that house, and I'm going to have my way about it," and then the lady of the family flung herself back in the rocking-chair with such vehemence as to snap two strands of the cane.

For about five minutes peace, white-winged, dove-eyed peace, hovered over the scene. Metcalf finally ceased his stalkings and looked at the partner of his woes. She was in tears.

"Come, my darling," said he, as he put his arms around her as tenderly as in the days of wooing, "you shall have the house just as you want it."

"Will you forgive me, love?" and the tears trickled through her fingers.

"Of course I will," and, would you believe it! That gray-headed old man stooped down and kissed his wife with as much force and feeling as he did before she became Mrs. Metcalf! Thus harmonized, the two heads bent lovingly over a bit of paper, and the following is the result:



A—Doors.
B—Windows.

The observer will observe by close observation that one side of the house does not connect by doorway with the other. This was a happy thought of Metcalf's which was acquiesced by the unsuspecting Mrs. Met. It was secretly designed by the old man that his wife's mother should occupy one side of the house, you see!

"Now this plan," says Metcalf, "is one that will get up a house that will cost but very little. There's no gawdy flummery about it, and I tell you, love, we've got to make every edge cut this year, for the coming summer is to be the dullest known in the annals of history."

"Yes," sighed Mrs. Met., "we must economize, that's true, but how much more would it cost to have closets?"

"I've calculated, and then I went down and got a carpenter to corroborate my calculations, and I find by actual count that the closets will cost \$158.98 apiece, making a total cost of \$259.92."

"Oh, no! not that much."

"Every cent of it. And as for bay-windows, George Reynolds told me yesterday, confidentially, that the man who invented bay-windows was suing every carpenter in Georgia for infringing on his patent, and now you can't get a carpenter to put one in a house for love or money."

And thus did Metcalf toy with his wife's heart-wishes. The house is under way and there is a painful absence of closets and bay-windows, notwithstanding the fact that Mrs. Metcalf swore most positively that she would have her say-so about its construction.

VARIÉTIES.

SLEEPING IN CHURCH.—Perhaps the most curious things about St. Philip's Chapel, Winchester, are the ancient stall-seats now affixed to the wall of the antechapel. These have their seats so arranged upon hinges that those who sit in them can maintain their position only by balancing themselves with care and resting their elbows on the seat-arms; so that, if the monks who used them dropped asleep during Divine service, the seats came forward and pitched them headlong on to the floor; nay, if they only dozed and nodded, the hard oaken seat clapped against the hard oaken back, and made a noise loud enough to attract the attention of the whole congregation. Nothing was ever more cleverly contrived to keep people awake at church.

ENGLAND OF TO-DAY.—We alone, says Lord Carnarvon, of almost all the nations of Europe retain the pattern of that old feudal society, changed as it may be, which once overspread the whole face of Europe. We have modified it, but we retain its outline; and, although there are many changes that we may seek to gain, yet, in the England of to-day—in our abundant prosperity, in our equal laws and our well-ordered Constitution, in our united classes and our temperate and beloved Monarchy—in all these things, after making due allowance and deduction for all human institutions, we have a picture that our ancestors hardly ever dreamed of as possible even in the pages of their fondest Utopias.

LEMON SYRUP.—When people feel the need of an acid, if they would let vinegar alone and use lemons or apples, they would feel just as well satisfied and receive no injury. A suggestion may not come amiss as to a good plan when lemons are cheap. A person should then purchase several dozen at once, and prepare them for use in the warm trying days of the spring and summer, when acids, especially citric and malic, or the acid of lemons, are so grateful and useful. Press your hand on the lemon and roll it back and forth briskly on the table to make it squeeze more easily, then press the juice into a bowl or tumbler—never into a tin. Strain out all the seeds, as they give a bad taste; remove all the pulp from the peels and boil in water—a pint for a dozen pulps—to extract the acid. A few minutes' boiling is enough; then strain the water with the juice of the lemons, put a pound of white sugar to a pint of the juice, boil ten minutes, bottle it, and your lemonade is ready.