

## MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

IT is not within the power of words to express that depth of ecstasy which harmony touches in its devotees. No language can be so exquisitely framed as to convey an adequate idea of that elevation of soul, that sublimity of feeling, that rapturous abandonment of mind which beautiful harmonies awaken in those natures attuned to their utterance.

"The thought that most thrills our existence is one which before we can frame it in language is gone." And infinitely more difficult to embody in words is the spell, the charm, the chaotic thoughts of music. If it were otherwise an attempt might be made to compass in morals the ebullitions of delight which "Cavalleria Rusticana" engenders.

It is a remarkable composition. A melodrama in melody, a tragedy in tempos, an opera in obscurity.

The libretto of this extraordinary work is a masterpiece of dramatic construction. There are but five characters, but they are disposed with admirable skill. The story is sad. A maid is betrayed by a faithless lover. Her rival, a married woman, has unblushingly met the same fate. The husband murders the miscreant.

At the door of the church, the maid confesses to her shame. Her confessor is the mother of her betrayer. She cannot enter the holy place. Anon she meets her lover and upbraids him. She is repulsed and renounced with scorn. Her rival with the shamelessness of Carmen, approaches to enter the sanctuary. She asserts her supremacy in the bosom of her cavalier Cervantes. The ruined girl tells the wronged husband. The two men meet. A duel follows in the garden. The seducer is murdered and the victim of man's caprice is avenged. An intensely dramatic story, delicately and unoffendingly told.

The music of "Cavalleria Rusticana," is by Pietro Mascagni, an Italian boy of 23. It is of the advanced school of his native land, with Wagnerian touches of singular grandeur. Its superb melodies are original and indescribably beautiful. Its instrumentation is something marvelous. Nothing like it has been heard in years. It is refreshingly new and delightful, and has excited the wonder and envy

of thousands of musicians all over the world.

The above popular opera will receive its first rendition in this city next Tuesday night, by the Duff Opera company.

"A Trip to Africa," which will be given by the Duff company, is too well-known in this city to require extended notice. Already nearly every seat in the house has been sold for the first night.

Decidedly one of the very best melodramatic and spectacular productions now on the road is the great drama, "After Dark," now in its fourth successful season under the management of Wm. A. Brady. It will be the attraction at The Victoria Wednesday night next. "After Dark" deals largely in what may be termed the shady or "spotty" side of city life, introducing concert halls, boxing matches, crooks, life in the lower stratum of society, and introducing scenes far more safely viewed upon the stage than in real life without the accompanying protection of a policeman. Added to the spice of the realistic dialogue, the sensational incidents, the truthful reproductions of city life, is a most absorbing plot carrying with it a story that increases in intensity as the action moves along, leaving the spectators impatient, as the act drop falls, to know what will follow, when the scenic curtain rises again. A fortune in itself has been expended in the beautiful scenery, the great railroad effects and the different mechanical contrivances, while the company of artists depicting the characters in play, who are experienced professionals, have been selected for their peculiar fitness to each part.

The Imperial was reopened as a stock house Wednesday night, by the Carra Morris Company. The organization is well balanced and should be well patronized. David Garrick holds the boards for this week, except Saturday night. For the first three nights of next week the company will produce the "Streets of New York," and the last three nights with Saturday matinee, "Lady Audley's Secret."

Prof. Foster has arranged for an athletic exhibition at the Imperial to night. Several local sports will

participate in the evening's entertainment.

Charlie Reer, who was seen here with the "hoss and hoss" combination, died last week in Boston. Death was caused by pneumonia.

Margaret Mather has been dreadfully scored by the San Francisco critics.

The Delmonico Music Hall is attracting large crowds every night.

Salvini will be seen for the first time in this city, Dec. 12 and 13.

Margaret Marshall has returned to Cordrays Seattle house.

Incog will hold the boards at The Victoria, Dec. 5 and 6.

George Berry is playing in stock at an Oakland theatre.

Our German Ward is booked for The Victoria, Dec. 8.

## CLOCKLESS COUNTRIES.

Liberia, in Africa, has neither clock nor time piece of any sort, the reckoning of time is made entirely by the movement and position of the sun, which rises at 6 a. m. and sets at 6 p. m., almost to the minute, the year round, and at noon it is vertically overhead. The islanders of the South Pacific have no clocks, but make a curious time marker of their own. They take the kernels from the nuts of the candle tree and wash and string them on the rib of a palm leaf. The first or top kernel is then lighted. All of the kernels are of the same size and substance, and each will burn a certain number of minutes and then set fire to the next one below. The natives tie pieces of bark cloth at regular intervals along the string to make the divisions of time. Among the natives of Singar, in Malay Archipelago, another peculiar device is used. Two bottles are placed neck to neck, and sand is placed in one of them, which pours itself into the other one every half hour, when the bottles are reversed. There is a line near by also, on which are hung twelve rods marked with notches from one to twelve. A regularly appointed keeper attends to the bottles and rods and sounds the hours upon a gong.