

Music.

THE annual election of officers of the Toronto Clef Club took place at the last meeting, with the following results: President, Mr. H. M. Field; Vice-President, Mr. J. W. F. Harrison; Secretary, Mr. W. J. McNally; Treasurer, Mr. A. T. Cringan; Committee, Messrs. J. Humfrey Anger, Edward Fisher, and A. S. Vogt.

Rafaele Vitali, a singer, well known in his day, who has just died in Italy, had a curious experience during the course of his career. One evening at Rome, while he was singing in "Louisa Miller," he was suddenly struck with the lowering of the voice, which made it impossible for him to finish his role. In one moment he had been changed from a tenor into a baritone, and for the rest of his career he sang in this latter capacity.

Sousa has received quite a flattering reception in Germany, whither he went about a month since. He was accorded the notable compliment of being invited to conduct the famous Philharmonic Orchestra at a concert in Berlin.

A singer named Solak, of Budapest, lately gave a concert twelve hours long, during which time he never ceased to sing. He got through 250 songs and still survives.

Verdi will write no more for the theatre. He is putting the finishing touches to a grand oratorio, something in the style of Mendelssohn's "Elijah."

There is a movement on foot, and, in fact, a man is at present in London, to bring Adelina Patti again to this country next season.

Madame Nordica will not sing in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, this season.

A serious movement is on foot to establish a permanent orchestra in Baltimore, Md.

Marchesi says the best voices come from America, Australia and Austria.

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The Drama.

CORA URQUHART POTTER once said that European and American civilization was not nearly up to the standard in some things of that which is obtained in South Africa and the coast towns. "In that country," Mrs. Potter said, "women always come to the theatre with a scrap of lace over their heads; they never wear hats in the evening." It isn't a particularly inspiring thing to compare the consideration shown by these women whom we are accustomed to regard as semi-barbarous with that of the women of our own country. However, those of Toronto are not entirely to blame. In only one theatre in this city has anything ever been done looking towards providing our women with proper facilities for arranging their toilets preparatory to viewing the performance. The Grand, which should be better than any other, is signally deficient in this respect. But now that the crusade against "the theatre hat," so long prosecuted without result, is bearing fruit, as shown in the lessened use of these monstrosities, Mr. Sheppard will perhaps do something along this line for his patrons. The time for action is ripe. Could he not try the effect of placing a dressing-room near the entrance, in charge of a woman who understands her business, one of those rare creatures who can set a skirt or settle sleeves and is well up in those little ways which every woman appreciates. Fit out the room with mirrors, boxes of face powders, friz pins, and other essentials for feminine comfort, and the wearing of two-thirds of the wraps and hats of the fair patrons of the Grand would be checked. Such a convenience would become as popular as the Ladies' Dressing Room on a Pullman sleeper; at least the experiment is well worth trying. One thing is certain, that there is no room for unnecessary wraps in the auditorium of the Grand, and, even when unimpeded with roof-garden hats, the view is none too good. It is the general rule that the average woman of the middle class when she imitates at all, seeks the model of her imitation in the social class above rather than in that below her own. This rule has its conspicuous and irritating exception in the

matter of the theatre-hat. For years well-bred women—women of social consequence—have appeared at the theatre, when the occasion was not a sufficiently brilliant one to warrant an appearance without head-covering, in small, dainty, close-fitting bonnets or toques, which scarcely, while exceedingly appropriate and becoming, meant more than a twist of lace or velvet and a vote. Thus, as the courtesy inseparable from all good breeding dictates, the rights of those seated behind her to a view of the stage and its players remain uninterfered with. At the other extreme of the social scale, the Biddys and the Arriets flaunt, at the theatre, hats that sweep the skies and close out as effectually as a blank wall all view from anyone behind their Upas shade. Why, in a matter whose rights and wrongs are so peculiarly obvious, the great majority of middle-class women should choose to imitate their kitchen-maids rather than their social leaders, must forever remain a problem to the student of femininity. Why managers permit so flagrant an imposition upon their patrons' purchased rights, as the universal wearing of such hats in their theatres is a problem no less unsolvable. A man's hat is promptly removed by an usher if ignorance of social laws keeps it on his head in a theatre. Yet a man's hat is an "offence defensible" indeed, compared with the monumental outrages on the rights of the neighbour that the ignorance, the stupidity, the porcine obstinacy of the average woman theatre-goer deface her withal!

Sir Henry Irving announced on the occasion of the first production of "Cymbeline" recently that his next production would be Shakespeare's "Richard the Third." The statement was received by an enthusiastic shout of approval. It is something over nineteen years since he appeared as the humpbacked Duke of Gloucester, but in 1877—January 29th was the actual date of the revival—the Lyceum was still under the Bateman management. Therefore the promised revival will give us for the first time the great play as the master-mind of Irving deems it should be presented. Of course, his impersonation of *Richard*, though vividly remembered for its originality of conception and its subtlety and strength of execution, is sure to present as freshly interesting a study as did his *Macbeth*, when he revived that play some thirteen years after the Bateman production. "Richard the Third," we feel certain, will prove one of the greatest of his embodiments, and, of course, the play will offer splendid scope to the scenic artist, the costume designer, and the archæologist, as ordered by Sir Henry Irving's imagination. Of course, Miss Ellen Terry, whose exquisite *Imogen* has added another jewel to her histrionic crown, will play the *Lady Anne*, and her grim courting of *Richard* should be a scene to remember.

Mr. Henry Miller, the former leading man of the Empire Stock Company, New York, is a feature in the company A. M. Palmer has formed to play at his new Great Northern Theatre in Chicago. Before assuming this position, Mr. Miller will undertake a short starring tour, opening in Canada. He will present "Sowing the Wind," seen here two seasons ago, in which he gives a remarkably fine performance of an old man who loved and lost in his youth; "Frederick Lemaitre," an artistic embodiment of an incident in the great French actor's life; "Liberty Hall," a delightful modern play, and "Gudgeons," in which he does the best work of his life. Character work is far better suited to Mr. Miller than conventional society parts, for in the latter he is apt to grow monotonous and lapse into mannerisms. If he would do more character work his reputation would be enhanced accordingly.

A galaxy of five young women of odorous reputation, who have been successively the scandal of three European capitals, are at present performing in New York. They are termed the Barrison sisters. It is said that their entertainment, while sufficiently shocking, is intensely stupid. None but inane Johnnies, with receding foreheads, and inoffensive shop-girls who think that a flavour of naughtiness constitutes amusement, are found within the precincts of Koster and Bial's these days.

A happy event looked forward to in the household of Charles H. Hoyt is the talk of the many friends of that gentleman and his handsome wife (Caroline Miskel, who was formerly a Miss Scales of this city). It may furnish to a new generation another clever writer of amusing farces, or it may give to the future stage another handsome actress.