

to New Orleans to see the great Cotton Exposition, then set their faces thitherward with the hope and expectation of seeing the many galleried home of the Grandissimes, of peeping through the iron-barred gate into the shadowy seclusion of Madame Delphine's garden of pomegranates and magnolias, of catching a glimpse, though never so fleeting, of Dr. Sevier and Mary, and John Richling. Certain houses are regularly pointed out to strangers as those described in Cable's novels; and enthusiastic strangers go to visit them in a steady pilgrimage all winter long. And by way of reward for all that he has done in opening up the historic treasures of the South to the interest of the North, Mr. Cable has received insolence, contumely, and spiteful intreatment. The Southern mind with all its virtues is arrogant and intolerant. Mr. Cable touched some sore places in the body social of Southern life, and though his touch was gentle as a woman's, resentment was prompt and deep. He alluded to the interfusion of negro blood, which is privately known and acknowledged—it was an insult double-dyed! As one who bore arms against it, he acknowledged that the Northern cause was "just"—he was a traitor and no Southerner! The anger, and hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness that raged at one time, and smoulders still, in New Orleans about Cable is past belief. Not its least amusing feature is the ignorance in which the people foster it. They have not read his calumniating novels; a thousand times No!—and never will! Or their indignant eyes have rested upon some sketch or paragraph barbed with special offence to proud Southern sensitiveness, and they have closed the book upon all the tenderness, and humanity, and truth that its covers contained. The seeds of rancour preserve their power of germination always longest in the gentler sex, and it is the women of Cable's city who hate him most heartily. Knowing this, Julie K. Wetherill's tribute to him in the *Critic* struck me as rather an audacious challenge to public opinion in the city of her adoption. It is probably the first favourably critical paper upon Cable that has ever been written, for wide dissemination at least, from the city he knows and loves so well—knowledge and love which he has shared with all of us.

I too have seen Mr. Cable's house, and sat at his board, though my host was not the author of "The Grandissimes," but that over-rated and under-rated, and altogether eccentric, poet, Joaquin Miller, who occupied it during the winter of the Exposition, and dispensed its hospitalities in his unconventional Californian fashion, to the great delight of many. The house is a frame one, painted in olive and red, and surrounded by the wide "gallery" that gives its individuality to the Southern home. It is away up in the "garden district" of New Orleans, where the roses blow all the year round, and the tall glossy-leaved magnolias stand graceful sentinels before every door, and the great brown river rolls sleepily past to the blue Gulf farther south, and over all the sun broods, near and lovingly, every long, fragrant, delicious day. There are orange trees in the garden before the house; by standing tip-toe on the gallery steps one could just reach the fruit CEnone longed so vainly for. And the garden is everywhere bordered with sweet violets that send their incense up to his memory who planted them; for, as most people know, Mr. Cable's unpopularity in his native city has driven him from it, and he now lives near Northampton, in Massachusetts.

Just over the way was the cottage of the novelist's mother, all embowered in wisteria and sweet olive. Mrs. Cable is a tiny woman of the demure, domestic New England type, and her son looks very like her. She was much distressed, the day I met her, about Gayerre's attack upon her son in the Southern newspapers, but hoped that the unmixed adulation he was receiving from the Northern press at that time would "keep him correct." She did not fit in with the dreamy, sensuous life of New Orleans, this prim little lady with her careful New England pronunciation, her activity, and her very well-exercised conscience. She belonged, it seemed to us, to a sterner life. But we rejoiced to have found her there, because she was George Cable's mother.

MARIE PRESCOTT was not a disappointment at the Toronto Opera House last week, whatever may be said of her company. She has intensity of passion, sympathy, and dramatic insight. Evidently we had not seen her at her best in Toronto, for the qualities of her acting, which have already distinguished her, and must continue to do so, are most fittingly shown in a Shakespearian setting. Her support, moreover, was out of all relation with herself, being exceedingly amateurish. As *Pygmalion*, Mr. R. D. McLean displayed a magnificent physique, but histrionic abilities that were rather ox-like. He was not in the least in love with *Galatea*, which spoiled the poetry of the play, and he roared at the unfortunate work of his hands in a manner that must have dismayed her. *Leucippe* dropped his h's, which they never did in Greece; and *Chrysos* and *Daphne*, though old comedians, and good ones, gave their classic sentiments disagreeably

through their noses. The eternal fitness of things was not preserved in the stage setting to any great extent, the dressing being Roman rather than Grecian, and the accessories of *Pygmalion's* studio savouring strongly of the modern Gotham. Upon the same ground, the rendition by the orchestra, between acts, of "The Sweet By and By," might very reasonably be objected to.

I HAVE already had the pleasure of meeting Mdle. Rhea, through some old and valued friends of hers, who are delighted to welcome her back to Toronto and the Grand. We found her in her pleasantly old-fashioned parlour in that pleasantly old-fashioned and traditionally aristocratic hostelry known to all Canadians as "The Queen's," studying her part—*The Widow*—by the light of the flashing candel in the grate. It is difficult to convey Rhea's personality in words. She is dark and pale, with a rare beauty of expression. In repose her features bespeak a high intellectuality; in conversation they are radiant with the reflection of her quick-changing moods. She has the French impetuosity of manner, but she is not effusive. There is something very Spanish in her mobile face, though one guesses it to be a substratum of her nature. What one sees and knows of her casually is French—devotedly, enthusiastically French. No words can describe the charm of her inimitable accent, or the inborn grace of her every gesture. She talked to us of comedy, American and French.

"All this week," she said, "I play comedy. But it is the French comedy. *The Widow* is a burlesque, but a burlesque in white kid gloves."

Whereupon she gave us a rapid, graphic description of the plot of *The Widow*, which I simply despair of reproducing.

"But the Americans," she went on, gaily, "will not have the French comedy as it is with us, and we alter it for American taste. My manager, you see," and she showed us her part-book, "he cuts out, and cuts out! The English have no patience. They will not have conversation unlimited. They want action—action—action! In 'The Romance,' you see—you know 'The Romance'—there is a drawing-room of people, and they all talk—and talk—half an hour! But that is not to American taste. They like the—the fun of motion and speech, and not of idea, if it is not very apparent. It is what they call 'stilty.' Now, in 'The Romance,' we at home make speeches as long as a yard, and the audience is delighted. But not here."

"And this difference," she continued, "must have been for a long time—for look at your Shakespeare and our Molière and Racine. Molière could not have written as Shakespeare, and Shakespeare would have known better than to write as Molière; for nobody," with a gay little infectious French laugh, "nobody would listen!"

We talked of Gilbert's semi-comedy, and Mdle. Rhea waxed enthusiastic over her *Chrysos*.

"Ah!" she said, "I have such a *Chrysos* as one sees in the buffoon figures of Grecian frescoes. He was made to play *Chrysos*! And my *Cynisca*—ah!"

Speaking afterward of distinguished actors she had known and played with, Mdle. mentioned Coquelin.

"And what," said somebody, "is Coquelin like?"

"Coquelin!" she exclaimed in astonishment that the famous comedian's image was not imprinted upon every mind, "Coquelin! Why, he is a *genius*! Ah, he is magnificent! He has no peer, no equal, in the comedy of France, which might be called," she added seriously, "*legitimate* comedy. He is the great actor of the Comédie Française. Ah! he is wonderful! and he is coming to America!" Mdle. evidently was of the opinion that if ever America had cause for profound gratitude to France, she has it now.

Play-goers in Toronto may be interested in the fact that "Fairy Fingers," which Mdle. Rhea gives on Saturday, is the play in which she made her *début* upon the stage.

GARTH GRAFTON.

MUSIC.

TORONTO CHAMBER MUSIC ASSOCIATION.

THE first concert of the Toronto Chamber Music Association, given in Shaftesbury Hall on Monday evening, was a genuine success. A large and appreciative audience assembled in the spacious and suitable hall, which wore a more festive appearance than usual, from the fact that a rich display of tapestry and brilliant hangings at the back of the platform constituted an excellent background for the performers. To speak of the Toronto Quartette Club first, it is happily only necessary to give unstinted praise to the four gentlemen who compose it: Messrs. Jacobsen, Bayley, Fisher, and Corell. The individual playing of Mr. Jacobsen must always win the admiration of those who hear it, from his correct bowing and technique, and the polish and ease with which he executes the most difficult passages; while as a leader in string quartette music, he is thoroughly