

The CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS is printed and published every Saturday by THE BURLAND LITHOGRAPHIC COMPANY (Limited,) at their offices, 5 and 7 Bleury Street, Montreal, on the following conditions: \$4.00 per annum, in advance; \$4.50 if not paid strictly in advance.

TEMPERATURE

as observed by Hearn & Harrison, Thermometer and Barometer Makers, Notre Dame Street, Montreal.

THE WEEK ENDING

March 25th, 1883.				Corresponding week, 1882.			
Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.
Max. 32	35	37	38	Max. 38	35	37	37
Min. 25	25	27	27	Min. 25	25	27	27
Mean. 28	30	32	32	Mean. 31	30	32	32
Mon. 25	25	27	27	Mon. 38	35	37	37
Tue. 25	25	27	27	Tue. 40	35	37	37
Wed. 25	25	27	27	Wed. 40	35	37	37
Thur. 25	25	27	27	Thur. 40	35	37	37
Fri. 25	25	27	27	Fri. 40	35	37	37
Sat. 25	25	27	27	Sat. 40	35	37	37
Sun. 25	25	27	27	Sun. 40	35	37	37

CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.—Madame Emma Albani—Albani in Lohengrin—The Scene of Betrothal—Albani in Tannhauser—Elizabeth in Prayer—Madame Albani in some of her Principal Operatic Characters—Scene from Wagner's Parsifal—The Grotto of Gralsburg—Perseus Freeing Andromeda—Art Ruling the World.

LETTER-PRESS.—Albani—Prima Donna Assoluta—Ghost Music—Maggie of Lough Erne—Recent Canadian Literature—The Miracle of Life—How to Split a Sheet of Paper—Sword and Pistol—Musical and Dramatic—Love's Answer—A Long Lane—Its Turning—Famous Popular Songs—The Author of a Famous Song—A Drummer—Parliamentary Pen Pictures—Pillow Smoothing Authors—Fashion Gossip—Curious Facts About Precious Stones—Ten Dollars a Week—The Heroine of the Novelists of To-day—The Last Hours of Chopin—The Bacon-Shakespeare Craze—A Nitro-Glycerine Factory—Long Distance Telephoning—Analytic Fiction—Our Chess Column.

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.
Montreal, Saturday, March 31, 1883.

ALBANI.

A COMPLETE HISTORY OF HER MUSICAL CAREER.

BY JOHN LESPERANCE.

On the occasion of the first visit of this great artist to Montreal after many years of absence, I have thought it fitting to compile a full and authentic history of her brilliant career, derived from the most authentic sources. For this purpose I placed myself in communication with a person who knows her more intimately than any one else, who followed her from infancy to the day of her brightest triumphs, and who has authority to speak beyond any other living person. From him I obtained the family records out of which I extracted copious notes that I have woven into the continuous narrative herewith submitted to the compatriots of the celebrated cantatrice.

I.

Marie Louise Emma Cecile Lajeunesse was born at Chambly, Quebec, on the 27th September, 1847. Her father, Joseph Lajeunesse, of the ancient family de St. Louis, was professor of music and organist. Her mother, Melina Mignault, was her first musical instructor from the age of four to five years. At the age of two and a half years, Emma, aided by her younger sister Cornelia, sang by heart slight melodies in a clear, strong and brilliant voice. When her father performed on the violin she repeated every note with astonishing fidelity and rapidity.

At the age of four, Emma was of a sweet and playful disposition, and quite docile to the teachings of her mother who began by making her vocalize easy melodies and learn the accompaniments on the piano. She next taught her the first principles of music.

When she was five years old, her father took her to Plattsburg, where he placed her in an English school kept by a lady of the name of Moore. Mr. Lajeunesse, who stopped at the Hotel Fouquet, in the same town, went daily to give his daughter a music lesson. He placed in her hands Bertini's complete method for the piano. The child practised five hours a day and gave four or five pages of the author at each lesson.

This is the manner in which the father conducted her studies. He made her analyze the

value of the notes, practise very slowly and never allowed her to touch a note before having seen it in the book. He made her observe the fingering with the greatest exactness, and count aloud without ever slowing or pressing the movement.

From the first of September, 1853, to the first of the following January, she went over the whole of Bertini's method, with the exception of the last pages, where there are octaves that she could not reach owing to the small size of her fingers. During that time she began to speak English and to read English and French.

At the age of six she read easily at first sight easy pieces of vocal and instrumental music. Every evening also she practised on the harp with her father. About the same time her father went further and assigned her a professor of Greek from whom she learned all the elements in the space of one year. From this exercise she acquired the facility which later enabled her to sing in Maltese, Russian and other foreign tongues. Her master, Mr. Sexton, declared that she had an extraordinary aptitude for the Greek language.

At six and a half years of age, her father gave her a difficult study of Bertini, which she rehearsed every morning before breakfast, from seven to nine, during three months. At other hours of the day, she continued to study, and practised some fifty pieces of music of progressive difficulty.

At the age of seven she lost her mother and her father left the United States and returned to Montreal with his family. There the child continued to practise the piano and harp with the same assiduity. More than once her father surprised her in the act of singing snatches of opera from *Norma*, *Lucrecia Borgia* and *Martha*, acting at the same time with much archness. Nothing could distract or withdraw her from her studies, and when the hour for practising came on, she would lay aside her games or abandon her young companions to go through as many as 150 pages a day.

In 1856, when Emma was 8 years old, a Scotch balladist, named Crawford, met the child and her father at the store of Mr. Siebold, where she was in the habit of practising on the piano. Mr. Crawford, finding so happy a disposition in the girl for singing and accompaniment, asked permission of the father to have her assist him in his concerts at Montreal. At the first concert she sang several Scotch ballads and the grand air "*Robert, toi que j'aime*" from *Robert le Diable*. She accompanied herself in her singing, but the latter operatic air had been prepared beforehand. At the second concert she sang other Scotch ballads, in which Mr. Crawford taught her the proper pronunciation of the Scotch dialect. She met with the most unqualified success. So pleased and astonished was Mr. Crawford at her proficiency that he bought her pieces of music never seen by her, and which he placed before her during the concert itself. These pieces were the "*Cujus Animam*" of Rossini's *Stabat* and a grand cavatina of Roberto de Verius. She sang the melody and the words and played the accompaniment—all at first sight, not perfectly indeed, but sufficiently well to surprise Mr. Crawford and the public. The balladist then declared to the audience that he had never, in all his travels, met a child of that age who could execute such pieces with the aid of musical theory alone. Several Scotch ladies called the child to them and asked to see the father whom they warmly congratulated. The next morning's *Herald* stated that little Emma had taken the Mechanics' Hall by storm.

The child gave her third concert at Chambly, on the invitation of her granduncle, the Grand Vicar Mignault. Both villages assisted thereat. She sang a little French ballad, an aria from *La Favorita*, a German song, an English ballad, an Italian Cavatina, "*Auld Lang Syne*," "*Annie Laurie*," and played sixteen pages of variations on the "*Carnival of Venice*" by Beyer, with a number of other compositions. Her success was so great that the whole stage was strewn with flowers. She next gave concerts at St. Johns, L'Assomption, Sorel, L'Industrie and Terrebonne.

At the age of nine, Emma entered the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Sault-au-Roccollet, with her sister Cornelia, and her father was appointed one of the professors of the house. There Emma continued her musical education, under

the paternal guidance, until the age of fourteen, and went through a full course of study. During these years the sweet, docile, humble and amiable character of the young musician never belied itself, and she won the affection of her mistresses and companions. She soon began to compose little pieces for her fellow pupils, which she dedicated to the Superioress, Madame Trinca.

Later she wrote a hymn to Pius IX., consisting of solo, duo and quartet. She also composed a Triumphant March, inscribed to her father for New Year's Day, and whenever a little song or accompaniment was required she readily furnished it, her father having taught her the elements of harmony and all that was necessary to composition. She presided at the organ of the Convent and there her voice began to develop the qualities which it has since attained.

In 1860, on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Montreal, Mr. Lajeunesse presented to His Royal Highness a memorial on parchment setting forth the capacity of his child; this memorial was signed by forty or fifty persons who had been witnesses of her merit. The Prince returned a very flattering and complimentary reply through the intermediary of General Bross.

Toward the end of her conventual life, Mlle. Lajeunesse composed a grand duo of twenty-four pages for two pianos on the principal portions of the cantata composed by the famous pianist Sabatier, in honor of the Prince of Wales. This composition was executed by herself and one of the professors, with remarkable success.

One year before leaving the Sault, she gave her last concert at the Mechanics' Hall, Montreal, under the patronage of Sir Fenwick Williams, Lieutenant-Colonel Coursol, Mayor Rodier, Hon. George Cartier, Hon. Mr. Chauveau and others, and was applauded by one of the most distinguished audiences of the city. This is the place, however, to state that, notwithstanding her extraordinary promise, not the slightest offer was made by her compatriots to aid her in completing her musical education, or affording her the means of going to Europe to advance her career.

II.

One year later, Mr. Lajeunesse departed for Saratoga Springs, and some months afterward, Emma, aged 15, received an invitation from Grand Vicar Conroy, subsequently Bishop of Albany, to accept the position of organist in the Church of St. Joseph, in the capital of New York. She accepted the offer, and also became professor of the piano and of singing at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Kinwood. During the ensuing three years she worked very hard to perfect herself in the different branches of her art, and also to lay aside means wherewithal to enable her to pass over to Europe. Finally, with her own savings and those of her father, the help of Bishop Conroy, a concert given with a view to her voyage, and \$300 bestowed by the Churchwardens in reward for her efficient services, she took her departure for New York, amid the regret of the whole congregation, and accompanied by more than fifty of her friends, who bade her far well on board the steamer. She sailed alone from the Empire City, bound for Glasgow, where, having visited the ancient palace of Mary Stuart, she proceeded on her way to Paris. In her capacity as former pupil of the Sacred Heart, she called at the Mother House of the institution, and asked to be shown to a respectable boarding establishment. She was directed to that of Mlle. Laillet, the mother of one of the ladies of the Convent. This person had no vacant apartments, but the young artist met there Mlle. Guérard, distinguished in musical circles as an accomplished pianist. By this lady she was invited to visit her aunt, the Baroness de Laflitte, from whom she received a cordial welcome, and in whose house she obtained board and lodgings at the rate of 250 francs a month. The Baroness de Laflitte, and her brother, M. Pacini, were very fond of music, and often gathered the best talent of Paris in their parlors. This fortunate circumstance afforded Mlle. Lajeunesse a rare opportunity of meeting the most celebrated artists of the French capital, and the young American—as she was then called—had frequent occasion to display her abilities. One day, Prince Poniatowski, a pupil of Rossini, and himself an illustrious composer, and

Maurice Strackosch, the well-known impresario, met at the house of M. Pacini expressly to hear the young lady. Mlle. Lajeunesse sang for them selections from *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Sonnambula*, and received the highest praise from these connoisseurs for her facility in reading a *prima vista*. They assured her that she was in possession of a good style and a wide range of voice. The Prince then advised her to go to Milan with the view of studying Italian opera. The latter did not take action on this counsel at the time, as her principal object in going to Paris was to continue to take lessons on the organ and piano and perfect herself in the science of harmony. To this end, she applied for examination to one of the first organists of the great city, M. Benoist, who informed her that she needed only a few directions and had reached the highest grade in this portion of her career. Such a remark was a double compliment to her father, who had hitherto been her only teacher, and to the youthful artist herself. In pursuance, however, of the advice of the Parisian professor, she took lessons in harmony from a distinguished contrapuntist, and lessons in singing from the world-renowned tenor, Duprez, at that time retired from the stage. This course of study was unfortunately cut short, after some two months and a half, by a severe attack of typhoid fever which prostrated Mlle. Lajeunesse for a considerable time. On her recovery, Mlle. Guérard, the pianist, gave her annual concert, to which Emma was invited as auxiliary, and the proceeds of which she was generously invited to share. M. Duprez also prevailed upon her to take part in a concert given by his pupils, and with her sang the mad scene of "*Ophelia*" in Thomas' *Hamlet*, amid the most unqualified applause. A few weeks later, having decided upon following the advice of Prince Poniatowski, M. Duprez, and her friend, the Baroness Laflitte, and her intention having become known to her friends, the American colony of Paris, and a large number of French families, tendered her a concert, at \$2 a head, from which she realized the handsome sum of \$1,200, with which she was enabled to make her way to Milan. I mention this and other pecuniary details to show once for all that Mlle. Albani depended upon her own hard work and resources from the beginning of her artistic life, and that she was not beholden to any one, as has been so often asserted, for her rise in the musical world. On her departure, Prince Poniatowski graciously furnished her with a letter of introduction to the Maestro Lamperti, at this time head of the Conservatorio of Milan. By him she was received with the utmost cordiality, and immediately taken under his tuition. For nine months she worked and studied with unremitting application, and having perfected herself in the Italian language under a competent professor, she was enabled, at the end of that period, to give unequivocal proofs of her proficiency and promise of a brilliant future. A public examination or competition took place at this juncture, at which several impresari of Italian opera houses were present, and the result was so satisfactory that Mlle. Lajeunesse received a most flattering offer from Messina. This she at once accepted. At this point, it may be interesting to give the true account of her change of name. It has always been said that she chose her present title in remembrance of, and out of gratitude to the city of Albany. That is a mere coincidence, and nothing more. The facts are that her impresario, referring to the Italian jealousy of everything foreign in the way of musical art, advised her to assume a more national appellation, and suggested that of the Albani family as short, simple and sonorous. The suggestion was acted upon, and Emma Lajeunesse has since shed more lustre upon that name than was ever brought to it by the long line of its patrician bearers.

III.

Mlle. Albani made her first appearance on the operatic stage at Messina, in *La Sonnambula*, that admirable idyl of Bellini, which will retain its freshness so long as there is music in the soul of man. The character of *Aminta* was well chosen by her, as particularly adapted to her youth and the sweetness of her disposition. It is a matter of history that her success was unequivocal, and from that eventful evening, early in 1870, her reputation was established. Soon after she was called upon to inaugurate a new theatre,