

MUSIC.

THE Juch operatic season was brought to a close on Saturday last with two of the best operatic performances which we have ever had in this city. I have no sympathy with the criticisms of the Juch organization which have appeared in several of the daily papers. So long as Montrealers show lack of appreciation of such companies as do visit the city, we cannot expect more expensively organized companies to come. A better performance of *Il Trovatore* than that of Saturday afternoon is rarely heard—if the cuts be forgiven—but there were hardly fifty people in the house. On several of the evenings proportionately small audiences listened to performances quite as good. Financial considerations must enter into every undertaking of this order; and to expect such a magnificent combination as Juch, Von Januschowsky, Scovil, Hedmond, Tagliapietra, and Vetta to appear here, supported by a faultless chorus and a perfect orchestra, is wholly unreasonable. To my mind the Juch company is one deserving of the highest encouragement.

The performance of *Il Trovatore* was specially noticeable for the appearance of Mr. Albert Louis Guille, who sang the part of *Manrico* in his native French. Mr. Guille's dramatic powers are as yet wholly undeveloped, but his singing is so good as to ensure a brilliant future for him should this important defect be remedied. Miss Von Januschowsky's *Lenora* and Miss MacNichol's *Azucena* were all that could be wished. The performance of *Mignon* in the evening was probably the finest of the week. Miss Juch as *Mignon* again displayed the remarkable versatility of her genius. Hedmond made an ideal *Wilhelm*, and Vetta, Von Januschowsky and Knight filled the other principal rôles with infinite credit.

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TWO gentlemen who sat behind me at the opera on Saturday evening discussed the future of opera in Montreal in a rather pessimistic tone. They were inclined to believe that the severe criticisms and poor patronage which the Juch Company received would result in such companies omitting Montreal from their circuit.

I do not think there is much fear for opera in Montreal. Much of our musical criticism is too transparent to have any effect. If opera is to be a success here, what we want in the first place is a thoroughly adequate opera house. When we get that—and the indications of our getting it are good—Montreal society people will give the opera the patronage it deserves, and the companies will be such as are even more deserving of their patronage.

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THE only musical event of importance this week has been the appearance of Mr. Frederick Archer, whose organ recitals have attracted large audiences. Mr. Archer is probably hardly entitled to the title claimed for him,

"the greatest of English organists," but he is certainly one of them. He is properly classed with English organists only because he is an Englishman, his style being much more that of the French school than of the English. The choice of his programme at the Dominion Square Methodist church on Monday evening showed this, and the execution of it showed it still more. It was such a programme as might have been chosen by Guilman, but it was one which Best, who is generally recognized as the greatest of English organists, would never have chosen. Mr. Archer's execution of the various numbers was beyond criticism. Particularly praiseworthy was his playing of Bach's G minor prelude and Fugue which was a triumph of executive skill. It was pleasing, too, to notice that the number called forth the greatest applause of the evening. The programme was varied by solos by Mrs. C. Jenking and Mr. J. Alex. Allan, both of whom have excellent voices, and by a selection by the choir of the church. The organ is a magnificent one, and Miss Russell, the church organist, played the accompaniments tastefully.

PICKED UP HERE AND THERE.

A BEAUTY show never fails to draw a large house at the Theatre Royal. The "Night Owls," the company appearing there this week, certainly furnish such a show, and the consequence has been crowded houses at every performance. The various performers are all bright, and furnish a most pleasing entertainment. Next week James Reilly, in the "Broommaker of Carlsbad," will be the attraction at the Royal.

After "The Old Homestead" Montreal people were naturally anxious to hear another of Denman Thompson's plays. The "Two Sisters" hardly equals Mr. Thompson's more famous play, but it is a piece of sterling merit, and large houses have enjoyed it at the Academy of Music every evening this week.

The complimentary benefit to Mrs. Neil Warner at Queen's Hall, on Friday evening of last week, was a most successful affair. Several of Mrs. Warner's pupils displayed elocutionary talent of the most promising nature, and the musical selections were also very good. The members of the St. John's Dramatic Club carried off the honors of the evening with their sketch "Who's to win him?" Mr. Tremain, as the unlucky lover who couldn't make up his mind, was specially amusing, and the other rôles were excellently filled by Miss McGavin, Miss Bertram, Miss Wright, Miss Affie Warner, Miss Bengough, Mr. Thomson and Mr. Henders. The scene from "The Hunchback" by Miss Richardson, Mr. F. O. Hopkins, and Mr. Neil Warner, was another most creditable effort, and the comedietta "Stage-Struck" was remarkably well rendered by the Misses Edith and Clare Samuel, Miss Edith Atwater and Miss May Warner. As *Frederick*, Miss Clare Samuel was a special success. The other reciters were Misses Vina Vaine, Daisy Boyde, Flora Lovell, Libby Vineberg, Katie Kearns, M. Michaels, Belle Boyde, and Grier, and Messrs. Percy Barclay and Walter Brown. Miss Sophie Myers played two piano solos with much credit, and the songs by Miss Ada Moylan, Miss Macpherson, and Mr. A. K. Fisk added an additional attraction to a most enjoyable entertainment.

Kennan's lectures at the Queen's Hall this week have been much less numerous attended than the fame of the lecturer and the merits of the lectures would have led one to expect. Kennan's descriptions are most realistic, and everything he says is worth listening to.