

MUSIC & THE DRAMA

THE engagement of the San Carlo Opera Company at Massey Hall, Toronto, was the most enjoyable event of the kind that the city has known for many months, and the patronage shown the evening concerts showed that the public was not slow to appreciate the opportunity of hearing such artists as Nordica and Constantino. "La Boheme" was an exquisite production and Miss Nielsen's "Mimi" had an individual charm which made the part of unusual dramatic quality. The matinee performance on Saturday afternoon included Donizetti's "Don Pasquale" and "Cavalleria Rusticana" and should have attracted a larger audience. The former composition is comparatively unfamiliar to a Canadian audience and its piquant, melodious humour was thoroughly enjoyed, Miss Nielsen again scoring a triumph. "Cavalleria Rusticana" was somewhat handicapped in stage arrangements but proved a much more effective production than on its last appearance, the popular "Intermezzo" being rendered with rare delicacy and restrained sentiment.

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The Montreal people have recently shown their appreciation of the Canadian prima donna, Donalda, at a complimentary concert to her, given in the Monument National. Donalda returned to New York after the event and sails for Europe, to be gone for several years.

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Although the Pittsburg Symphony Orchestra and the Mendelssohn Choir will be heard no more in musical companionship, the organisation of which Mr. Paur is conductor is to return to Toronto next season. Mr. H. M. Fletcher, conductor of the Schubert Choir and the People's Choral Union, has engaged the Pittsburg Orchestra for his concerts.

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When doctors disagree! Sometime ago, says a New York authority, Alan Dale, the dramatic critic, wrote an article called "The Worst Living Actor." It was devoted to flaying Richard Mansfield alive. Now John Corbin, of the New York Sun, contributes to Appleton's Magazine an article on "The Greatest English Actor." It is devoted to this same Mansfield. And yet some people wonder why actors and playwrights do not model their work upon the suggestions of critics. Which critic, for instance, is Mr. Mansfield to accept as oracle? Perhaps, in this case, the choice is easier than usual.

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The news of the decease of Dr. J. Persse Smith, who died recently in Illinois, was received with deep regret by his many friends in this country. The late Dr. Smith came to Toronto from Dublin, where he had been for many years conductor of the Dublin Musical Union, and where he had received the degree of Doctor of Music. He was organist and choirmaster of St. Thomas Church, Toronto, and teacher of singing, organ and piano at the Conservatory of Music and left Canada just a few weeks ago to take a position as head of the musical department of Jacksonville, Illinois.

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In the new lyrical plays of England the decline of skirt-dancing and the return to dancing that can be heard as well as seen have been noticed by many observers, to whom the change is welcome. Mr. Warde, one of the best authorities in London on dancing, asserts that the public wants to hear the beat of the dancer's feet.

"These islands," says Mr. Warde, "have many original dances. America has none that it has not taken from the negro. Our English hornpipe, Lancashire clog dances, the Scottish reel and the Irish jig are not imitations of anything and the public welcomes them back."



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