

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

VON SUPPE'S opera of 'Fatinitza' has been a great success both in Europe and America, and it seemed but fair to expect that its first representations in Toronto would have been witnessed by large audiences. This expectation seemed the more reasonable, as the opera was to be rendered by artists who, in former visits to Toronto, had achieved distinguished successes. When Miss Adelaide Phillips, Miss Beebe, and Messrs. Fessenden, Whitney, and Barnabee are announced as the soloists of an Opera Company, all who have attended concerts and opera during the last lustrium, know that the vocal work will be well done by all, while great dramatic ability will characterize the interpretations of some of the artists. This being the case, nothing seemed more certain than that the Boston Ideal Company would be greeted by bumper houses; yet the melancholy fact remains that they had not one paying house during their short visit, and that the *matinée* performance had to be abandoned on account of the small attendance. For our people to overlook such performances as those of the 19th, 20th, and 21st ult., savours of downright fatuity, and it is to be feared that a long time will elapse before Toronto will again have an opportunity to witness good opera. 'Fatinitza' is the latest of Von Suppe's works, and while it is a thoroughly comic opera, its music has a strength and breadth that in many numbers rises to the dignity of grand opera. It is thoroughly original and catholic withal, possessing all the sparkle and brilliancy looked for in comic opera, while presenting splendid contrasts in weight and mass of music. The trio march in the last act is one of the most brilliant, spirited ideas of the present age of Offenbach and Lecocq, while the closing quartette of the first act is so beautifully elaborated and melodious as to rank with the best productions of the Italian school. Miss Phillips, who sang the title rôle, is well known as an artist of the first order, and ably sustained her reputation. Her voice has lost none of its magnetism and dramatic power of former

years, and her intensity of declamatory singing lent dignity to an otherwise light and frivolous part. At the same time, she was able to impart to her rendition of the merry lieutenant, a brightness and *chic*, which culminated in the trio march. This number possessed a fascination which was perhaps difficult to account for, but which was, nevertheless, so powerful that at the last performance the audience insisted on its being sung three times. Miss Beebe (although not the Miss Beebe who was the original member of this company, but her sister), as *Lydia*, sang prettily and correctly, and acted her not very arduous part with skill and success. The lightness of quality in her voice struck one at first as a strong contrast to Miss Phillips's magnificent tones, but this feeling soon wore off, and Miss Beebe very readily established a sympathetic feeling with her audience. The construction of the opera does not throw a heavy burden on the shoulders of the male soloists, which was the more to be regretted as these gentlemen were well able to undertake far more arduous tasks than fell to their share in 'Fatinitza.' Mr. Barnabee was a very successful *Izzet Pasha*, and infused a lot of quiet drollery into the character. The chorus was excellent, and composed of well-trained voices, a condition that has now become so rare that it deserves more than mere mention. It was evidently composed of people who had lately undergone a course of study such as Boston prides itself on, and it did Boston credit. The orchestra was not as well-balanced or as bright as it might have been, considering the rich and massive scoring of the accompaniments. All in all, the visit of the Boston Ideal Opera Company was an event long to be remembered by those who were fortunate enough to hear them.

During the same week the Royal Opera House was occupied by French's English Opera Company, who played an adaptation of Genée's 'Der See Cadet,' under the title of 'The Very Merry Mariner.' This opera is also one of the