

MUSIC & THE DRAMA

THE Buffalo Orpheus, the leading German society of the Bison City, is making extensive preparations for the three-day visit of the Wiener Maennergesang-Verein, Vienna's renowned male choral society. More than sixty years ago, in 1843, a number of Vienna singers assembled at the call of Dr. August Schmidt and formed what is now famous as the greatest choral organisation in Austria. The requirements for admission to this distinguished body differ somewhat from those made in a more democratic community. Before one can be known as a member, two persons who already enjoy that honour must vouch for his social position. Then the director examines him as to quality of voice, sight-reading and his general musical culture. No exceptions are made, which is a remarkable circumstance in a country where aristocratic social standards are dominant.

The members include the most prominent men in Vienna. Among them are officers of the royal government, artists, lawyers, physicians, authors. All are comparatively wealthy and the society pays its own expenses on all trips and gives the entire proceeds to charity. This condition of affairs also sounds strange to the Canadian citizen, who finds it difficult to grasp the idea of a choral society de-luxe.

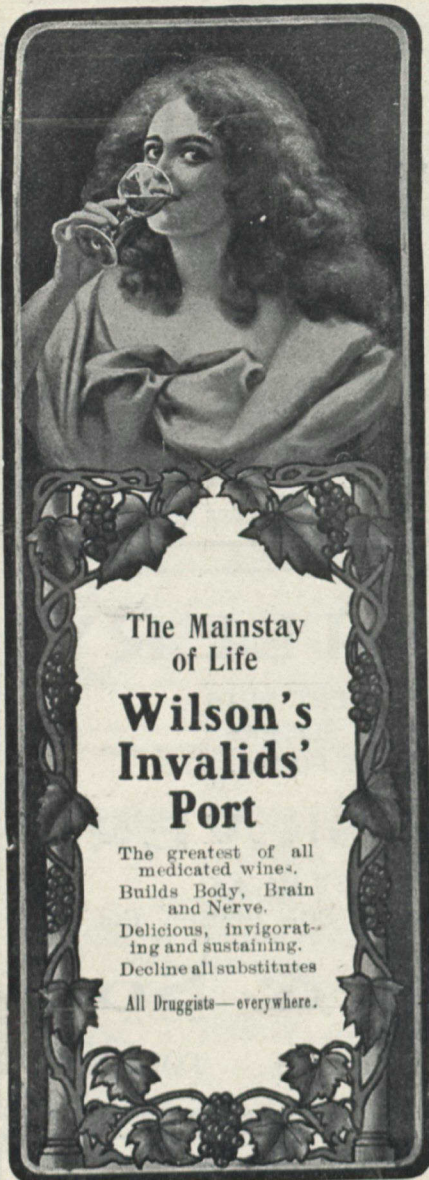
The singers sailed from Genoa, landing at New York last Saturday. Nearly two hundred of them will make the trip. The importance ascribed to the tour is shown by the fact that fifteen of the leading newspapers of Europe will send special correspondents with the society. Two days will be spent in New York. Then the singers will visit Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, where they will sing before President Roosevelt. Three of the fourteen days allotted to the American trip will be spent in Buffalo. On Monday, May 13th a concert is to be given in Convention Hall, where the Mendelssohn Choir of Toronto has also been heard. Parties from several Canadian towns, will attend this event. While it is to be regretted that Canada is not included in the society's itinerary, the coming of such an organisation to this continent cannot fail to be of general benefit.

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The Pinero play, "His House in Order," in which Mr. John Drew has the leading part, that of the suave of diplomatists, who steers as cleverly through domestic storms as through political tempests, has been delighting Canadian audiences. The story of the drama has become so well known during its prolonged success in London and New York that the local theatre-goer was prepared for the climax of the third act which is one of Mr. Pinero's most vivid pieces of work. Miss Roebuck as "Nina" attains a triumph such as few seasons afford. The didactic attempt to attach a "moral" to the play is ill-advised. The conclusion drawn by the matinee girl is that a little letter is a dangerous thing and that the first wife's relations should be kept at calling distance by the second victim.

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A new horror has been added to life. Melodramas on the "unwritten law" are to come to town and lurid play-bills exploiting the most tiresome trial that has been will make the highway hideous. There has been some talk lately of a censor for Toronto theatrical performances. This is the sort of thing for which such an officer is sadly needed. Canada is always patting itself on the back for its alleged decorum. A visitor from the United States recently asserted that plays and posters which would not be tolerated in some cities across the border are allowed in professedly respectable Canadian communities. The managers of high-class theatres are friendly to the appointment of a censor. Every month in Canadian cities plays are produced which are decidedly degrading. The "unwritten law" production is likely to be of the worst class.



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