

principally concerns the fortunes of the family of the Malatesti at Rimini. Francesca, daughter of Polenta, has for reasons of state been betrothed to Giovanni, son of Malatesta. Giovanni has two brothers, Paolo the Handsome, and Malatestino.

The scene of the first act is a court in the house of Francesca's ancestral castle at Ravenna. Francesca's women are exchanging taunts with a jester, when the voice of her brother Ostasio, in conversation with the notary, causes them to flee. Ostasio states that a plan has been made to substitute Paolo for Giovanni, during the courtship; for since Giovanni is lame, they think that Francesca would never consent to marry him. The marriage is to take place on the morrow.

Just then Paolo approaches, and Francesca is taken eagerly into the garden by her women, to see her lover. They stop motionless, and stand facing each other without a word.

At the beginning of the third act Francesca is reading the story of Lancelot and Guinevere to her women.

At the end Smaragdi appears and whispers in her mistress's ear and Francesca tells the women to leave her until vesper-time. When the room is empty, Francesca, who has already expressed fear at the return of Paolo, tells Smaragdi to run out and tell him not to come to her.

The message is in vain, however, for in a moment Paolo, sick with longing for Francesca, enters the room.

Together they start to read the romance of Lancelot and Guinevere. He urges her to read the words of the heroine, and their cheeks almost touch as they lean over the book. Finally, no longer masters of their feelings, they yield to the spell of the moment, fall into each other's arms, and their lips meet in a kiss.

The last act is in two parts. Francesca is in another room of the castle, with Malatestino, the younger brother, standing at her feet. Then Giovanni comes in, fully armed, and learns that Paolo had visited Francesca. He decides to find out if a meeting takes place again, and goes that night to the castle. Paolo is there, and tries to escape down a trap-door. He is caught, and Francesca receives the dagger-thrust intended for him. They die in each other's arms.

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A Comprehensive Programme.

MISS MARJORIE HARPER, Miss Edith Buckley, and Mr. Simeon Joyce, artist pupils of Mr. Frank Welsman, gave a most successful piano recital at the Conservatory of Music a week ago. A comprehensive programme ranging from Bach to Paderewski was played with unusual skill and finish, each of the participants giving evidence of the most thorough preparation and familiarity with the compositions in hand.

Mr. Joyce, in the Bach-Tausig D Minor Toccata and Fugue, displayed real virtuosity, producing at will effects of great power, breadth and tenderness. He was entirely at his ease in the difficult G major concerto of Beethoven, which was well conceived and rendered in a finely convincing manner. Miss Harper played the Allegro from Beethoven's E flat Sonata, Op. 31, in truly classical style and with clearly defined phrasing and nuances. Her strong temperament found greater scope in a group which she played on her second appearance, consisting of Rachmaninoff's Prelude, Grieg's "To Spring," and the Rigoletto Paraphrase. In these numbers her big technic and wide range of tone, effectively used in piling up a dramatic climax at one moment and again hushed to a delicate pianissimo, made her playing a delight to her hearers. Miss Edith Buckley won her audience by her impassioned reading of Chopin's Etude in C sharp minor, and by her delightful rubato and rare beauty of tone in the Scriabine Prelude for the left hand alone, and a Glazounow Etude. She also played the Paderewski Variations and Liszt's 11th Rhapsody—brilliantly so far as technic is concerned, and with animation and splendid mental grip in the interpretation.

Debussy's Evasive Sonata.

DEBUSSY'S new Sonata for cello and piano, written in the summer of 1914, is a strange piece of tone-painting. This work has not yet been publicly played in Canada. It was given its first production in America in Boston by Mr. Pablo Casals doing the cello part; its second in America and first in New York by Mr. Boris Hambourg last season. A few days ago it was played privately in Toronto by Mr. Leo Smith and Mrs. A. H. Chapman. Still more recently it was done by Mr. Boris Hambourg and Mr. Richard Tattersall at an art club in Toronto.

And it is a curious, shifting but eloquent piece of musical evasion. On first hearing it sounds like a piece of



"EXTRA SPECIAL."

Miss Chloe O'Hara is in the new revue at the Kingsway Theatre, "Extra Special." In the Newspaper Office scene at the beginning she appears as Still Another Advertiser, and in the Garden scene as one of the Dollar Princesses. Later she assists in an amusing incident in which, as a muscular Lady from Spain, she gives a shy young man (Mr. Lupino Lane) a first lesson in one of the arts of self-defence, and in the ardour of the contest simply "wipes the floor" with him.

subterfuge or a sort of tone-colour intrigue. Like most of Debussy's music, it evades any main point at issue and proceeds to play in the most furtive manner with the melodic idioms of our musical speech. It is sad, whimsical, capricious, eloquent, syncopated to the limit, pizzicato'd in the extreme, always shifting its base with a most elusive, wandering quality on the piano, answered by an equally fugitive but delightful evasion in the cello. Yet it has a personal message. It was Debussy's tribute to his deceased wife. And if in her life Claude Debussy was as oblique in his compliments as he was in his music to her after she was dead, Madame Debussy must have been in a state of bewilderment most of the time.

Yet it is a beautiful and worth-knowing work, and Messrs. Hambourg and Tattersall gave it a splendid interpretation in performance.

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The Old Songs.

MR. ROBIN H. LEGGE, father of Leginska, the famous pianiste, is apparently one of the most simple-souled men alive in the matter of music. Mr. Legge is the well-known critic of the London Daily Telegraph.

Writing in that great paper recently he said:

"Let me make a humble confession. I went one day during this week to a concert of no great pretensions, yet a perfect thing in its quiet, unassuming way. It began at the orthodox hour of three, or thereabouts; I was there when it began, anyway, and I remained not only to the end of the programme but even to hear the encore piece with which the concert ended. Now, my humble confession is this: I can bear usually with an hour of really good music really well played, and when I go a-concerting I always study the programme beforehand in order to note what I take to be the clou of the concert. On the present occasion I could not find a clou. It was all clou, so to say. But in truth I did not realize this fact until the concert was well under way. And now when I come to look over the programme there seems precious little in it to stir up one's soul, if so be a similar programme should present itself again next week or the week after. Yet my soul was stirred. It may be that that element of my being "threw back" over the centuries, for there was not a note in the scheme that was less than about 200 years old. But for all this hoary antiquity I loved 'The Laird o' Cockpen,' 'As I Walked out one May morning' (in announcing which even the accomplished singer could not refrain from getting the accent wrong. Read it and try!), 'Buy broom bizums,' or 'Young Waters,' or the delicious yarn of 'The Hundred Pipers.'

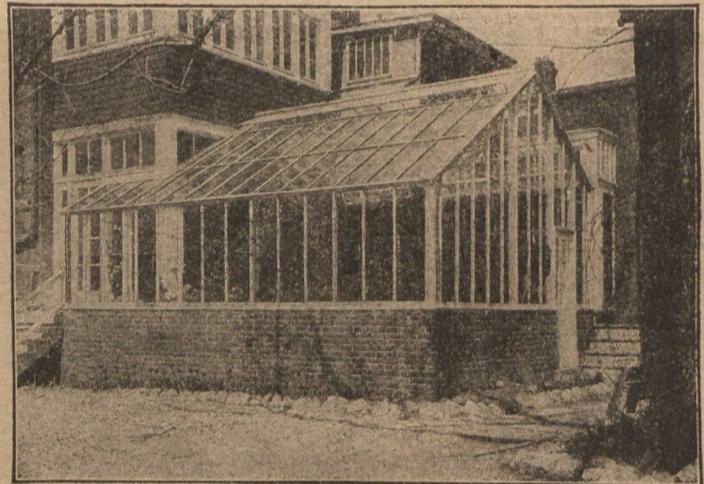
"I wondered then while listening, and I am wondering still. Yet I feel sure that in my heart of hearts I know perfectly well why I revelled in the comparatively unsophisticated strains of the old-world music. It rang true. There you have it. In these old English and Scottish tunes there was that

which was unmistakably of the soil or in the blood. But, as I said, it is all 'hundreds of years' old!"

Book Notes

(Concluded from page 22.)

sible his sources could be many times duplicated in this Dominion, but these sketches, which are illustrated voluminously by photographs and drawings by the author, weave around a select portion of the Niagara peninsula and certain sylvan recesses therein, a very distinct sort of woodland personality. His method is that of a young, enthusiastic, and somewhat poetic mind, desiring by a few strokes rather than by vain repetition to convey vivid impressions of the sights, sounds, odors, too, of the deep and gloomy woods. Therefore, one may expect something different from Gilbert White, Richard Jefferies or John Burroughs. These, the classic naturalists, have more facts to the page manifold; and facts properly may be the subject of nature studies; but they become dry as dust to the reader who is something more than a botanist. Using a slender network of facts, Arbrest seeks to clothe tree bole, branch and leaf and the outer rimming air with something of the mystery and magic that attends woodlore. Poetic prose sketches they are, and a very creditable contribution to the literature of Canadian woods. His intimacy with his beech woods helps the reader to a more intimate and joyous recollection of the woods he knew. He paints the seasons decorously, and there is no mention of anything so joyously jocund as the "old swimmin' hole." The book, in its delicately tinted gray beech jacket, is in the charming "gift" class. Toronto: William Briggs.



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