

A BRACE OF CONCERTS AND OTHER COMMENT

Musical Calendar Offers Retrospects and Distant Vistas

Detailed criticism of the recitals given by Messrs. Herman Sandby and John McCormack last Thursday night was deferred to this time for a very simple reason. The qualities and defects (if any are admitted) of the two artists are familiar, but the implications of their recitals, which occurred at the same time, are more suited to comment than to criticism. Mr. Sandby, who is part of the organization which plays nearly every week to the number of auditors drawn to each of Mr. McCormack's recitals, will not resent being placed with him. Mr. McCormack will find nothing incongruous, it is hoped, in being placed with one whom Philadelphia holds a sincere and worthy artist.

First, to Mr. Sandby's concerto which was the principal interest of the evening. Seldom has the reporter heard a work for the cello in which the resources of the instrument were so appreciated, seldom one in which they were so skillfully exploited. The first movement is notably a call to the concerto, interesting for the difficult feats of bowing, of double stops, or a near approach to them, of difficult positions, of rapidity in fingering—in short, of technical skill. It has only the slightest interest to the uninitiated hearer. The finale has much charm, is less of a bravura piece, and brings out the lighter graces of the cello. Between them is the slow movement, which, though it must have been written, it is both thoughtful and sentimental, follows a long curving contour of theme, and is possessed of some of the sweet melancholy one expects to find in the work of the composer of the Danish folk music heard last year. Its own finale is a combination of the qualities of the other movements, giving the cello's last word and the composer's first.

The accompaniment evidently is a piano transcription of the orchestral part which, it may be assumed, will be heard here when Mr. Sandby, with the work with the Philadelphia Orchestra. From the limited hearing, which showed no defect of execution, one judges that the orchestra will be entirely interesting.

Mr. McCormack was in so much better voice Thursday night than at any time last season (that is 1914-15; the reviewer did not hear Mr. McCormack at his previous appearance this season); that one wondered why, with all his endowment of voice, he should let himself run down. It is still true that he sings too much and too often. This year he has been lucky. His voice is easier and more pleasant to hear. Infrequently one detects a slight readiness in his upper tones, but his transitions are smooth and skilful when they were faulty and broken last year. His head tones and rielto are often ravishingly pure and beautiful, a rare thing in any singer. His middle and lower tones are still undiminished by time. And he always sings on an amble. It would be too easy to say that any one would at that price. Let be. Mr. McCormack earns what he gets.

He is a superb singer of ballads, and he has devoted himself for some years to reminding his hearers of the most simple of passions and the most graceful of attitudes. Thursday evening when he turned to the crowd behind him on the platform and sang the entirely simple, entirely unsophisticated ballad of mother love the transforming effect of his action was really indescribable. It is true that many other singers have done much the same thing. Alma Gluck sang here, in her lovely voice, Dvorak's "Songs My Mother Taught Me" with an approach to this effect. But with Mr. McCormack, measure all the purely national enthusiasm and the factitious reputation he possesses, the audience feels a more immediate sympathy. His heart is the heart of his hearers. He is a good boy, and they feel that at once.

If he would only devote himself irrevocably to the best! Not the singing of unfamiliar songs by Rachmanninoff, nor even the repetition of Schumann and Schubert, is intended. For all we care, Mr. McCormack may, as is threatened, sing "I Hear You Calling Me" six times in succession. What we earnestly wish is that he would husband his voice, would cheapen himself no whit, would dominate his audience by sheer beauty of voice and sincerity of art.

The fortuitous and undesirable coming together of the two recitals here discussed brought into high relief the question of all local recitals, which has been considered in this place before. Mr. Sandby certainly did not have all the audience he deserved, although what he had was intelligent and appreciative and, in a sense, representative. Mr. McCormack had an audience more representative of his popularity than of his gifts, more attracted by his material than by the purity

WHAT THE PEOPLE OF THEATRELAND AND MOVIEVILLE ARE DOING WHEN OFF DUTY



A FRIENDLY CALL John Drew drops into the office of Daniel Frohman.

of his methods. Similarly the efforts of promoters of chamber music meet with little appreciation, and the orchestra, which gains an immense patronage through the year, cannot often attract to a single performance the crowd which frequents the Metropolitan on a popular night. And when one reaches musical comedy the comparison is ludicrous. Yet that style is legitimate, and a conjunction of "Stop! Look! Listen" with "The Magic Flute," "Alone at Last" with "The Barber" is not at all improper. One wonders whether serious music (decidedly not to be invidious with "good") will ever take its place beside popular music.

The Musical Glasses

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16 The pupils of the Settlement Music School will give their regular concert at 2:30 at the College Settlement, 433 Christian street. The public is cordially invited.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20 The Hahn Quartet will be heard in recital in Germantown Association Hall. Program: Quartet, Op. 15, No. 2, G major; "The Romanesque" by Brahms; "Edward Grieg's Irish Reel," "Molly On the Shore," Percy Grainger; Five Novelliettes.....Alexandre Glazounov.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21 The 5th afternoon concert of the Philadelphia Orchestra, 3 o'clock, at the Academy, Kathleen Parlow, the Canadian violinist, featured artist, will be the soloist in Beethoven's Concerto in D major. The orchestra numbers are the overture by Leon Giovanni and Strauss' "Ein Heldenleben."

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22 At 8:15, at the Academy, the program above noted, the soloist and the orchestra.

MONDAY, JANUARY 24 Recital at the Academy by Mischa Elman. Program to be announced.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25 At the Metropolitan, an opera, to be announced.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26 High-Gloria recital at Witherspoon Hall. The popular first vocalist of the Philadelphia Orchestra and a young Italian pianist, highly spoken of by reviewers and well known here by reason of his family associations. Coached by Busoni, Gabrielini, and a great student, Mr. Giurini began his concert tours at the age of 18. By all reports, an interesting young man who will repay the encouragement of the musically inclined.

MONDAY, JANUARY 31 Song recital at Witherspoon Hall by Mrs. Regina Haasler, daughter of Maria Haasler and pupil of Elizabeth Lehmann. She is a contralto and has the rare combination of good singing voice and a directing intelligence.



DIXIE GERARD'S AN ARCHER "Passing Show" player draws bow.



TOM FORMAN MOTORS The Paramount star takes advantage of California's roads and climates.

Drury Lane Melodrama Spurns Movies for "Vode"

The theatregoer's love for melodrama has been pretty thoroughly tested since the advent of the "movies," and many of the old-time plays which delighted those who enjoyed the real "thrillers" have furnished the screen players with material for their principal productions. There is still quite a long stretch of imagination, however, between the old-style melodrama which held away before the theatrical firmament was so thickly dotted with rattle music and shows and comedies and the dramatic thrillers we see on the screen today. There are still remaining thousands of theatregoers, particularly in America, who do not enjoy the pictureplays as they do the plays themselves, with the hero, the heroine and the villain all mixed up in a gigantic plot, which, however, always results in the inevitable "happy ending." That the melodrama is still popular in this country is evidenced in the success scored by Langdon McCormick's spectacular drama of the timberland called "The Forest Fire," which comes to B. F. Keith's Theatre next week with a record of three years of undiminished success in England. The story contains all the old-time thrills. There is a gigantic locomotive, which rushes through a forest that is a veritable blazing furnace. "The Forest Fire" is an ideal play for the "movies," and the producers have refused several fine offers for the right to show it on the screen in this country before bringing it here as a stage production. The fact that it has been received with such tremendous success in this country, however, has saved the piece from capture by the photoplay men, and it will continue to send real thrills through the audiences who attend the vaudeville theatre.



SIR HERBERT TREE VISITS LOS ANGELES The Fine Arts Film crowd turn out to welcome their new star.



MOVIE MAGNATES BUY AN AUTHOR Here are the officers of the Frohman Amusement Corporation signing a contract with Larry Evans for his novels.



JOHN DREW'S NEW TAILOR Continued from Page One

of the ballroom and my first scene in a moving picture was taken. I was given \$3 and I took to come back the next day. I worked there for several months on a guarantee of \$5 a day until finally the news came that the company was going to move to California to take pictures. One day the director sent for me. I had been late and thought he was going to fine me. "Do you think you can act?" demanded Mr. Powell. I admitted I thought I could. I explained that I was no Bernhard, but still I thought I was pretty good, considering the little experience I had had. "Well, you are to play the lead in 'A Man With Three Wives,' he snapped. "You had better make good. Now go to see the wardrobe woman about your costumes."

But in 1934 came a famous drought, which brought idleness and anxiety. Vachell, finding time heavy on his hands, began a book as a pastime and a relief. That book, "The Romance of Judge Ketchum," was sufficiently successful to encourage him to continue. "The Model of Christian Art," "The Quicklands of Factolus," "An Impending Sword," "A Drama in Sunshine," "The Profession of Life" and "John Charity" followed it. Then came a book of sketches, "Life and Sport on the Pacific Slope," "The Shadow Third" and "The Pinch of Prosperity." Probably to most readers these books are unfamiliar.

The author's wife, meanwhile, had died, and he had taken his children back to England. With his next book, "Brothers," he probably first began to challenge American attention. That story was followed by "The Hill," a story of school-boy friendships at Harrow, and a beautiful story of youth it was "The Face of Clay" came next—an experiment in the imaginative. Then he wrote a book called "Hills Down," "Bunch Grass," also produced a play, with the same title and the same theme (1907). He wrote four more novels—"The Waters of Jordan," "The Paladin," "The Other Side" and "John Varney."

Vachell's next work was a comedy called "Jelfa," produced by Gerald Du Maurier at Wyndham's Theatre, London, April 12, 1912, and purchased by Witherspoon and the Pacific Slope. "The Shadow Third" and "The Pinch of Prosperity" were produced in 1912. Vachell has been a figure to attract attention on both sides of the Atlantic. He has produced five more books—"Hills Down," "Bunch Grass," "The Waters of Jordan," "The Paladin," "The Other Side" and "John Varney." He has also written four more plays, "Quinn's" made from the novel, familiar in New York and London; "Searchlights," produced by H. B. Irving in London and tried out by Mrs. Campbell in San Francisco; "The Chief," now being acted by John Drew, and "The Case of Lady Camber," at present played by H. B. Irving in London.

BLANCHE SWEET'S BEGINNINGS

Continued from Page One son ever to be starred in motion pictures, every one bowed down to her; but it did not turn her head a bit. After I was made up, several of us girls were hustled out to another corner



JULIAN ELTINGE SWIMS The star of "Cousin Lucy" takes "Nemo" and "Punch" with him.



LOUIS MANN REFLECTS Human nature must be the actor's Bible.

I know I must have gazed at him open-mouthed. "Run along," said he. And as I turned, "You had better push your eyes back where they belong or some one will knock them off."

How I did work over that part. I would lie awake nights and plan what I would do in the morning. I rehearsed so much around the house that my dear grandmother was driven to distraction.

I never expect to go back to the stage again. The life of southern California has crept into my blood. I love the open, the fields and trees. Really the only time I am in the house is at dinner time. I even sleep on a porch, on a three-sided, where I can get the scent of the neighboring orange orchards.

Recognition of people we know in stage characters is an appreciable part of the play-goer's pleasure. Atmosphere is brought on with the first act, and the audience is always real and never acting. They are never exhibition like those other classes, especially the wealthy class, who, too often, live lives that are not real.

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JULIA CULP SINGS GROUP OF SONGS

Orchestra Plays Dvorak's "New World" Symphony at Academy

There seemed to be some disagreement yesterday afternoon concerning the disposition of the names of Sir Henry Wood and Arnold Schoenberg as orchestrators of the songs sung by Mme. Julia Culp in her capacity as assisting artist with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Since all attention was necessarily directed to the singing of Mme. Culp, and one accepted the orchestra program because it did not embarrass the singer, confessedly an untalented thing to do, the question cannot be settled now. Fortunately this was the only disagreement of the afternoon.

So harmonious in spirit were singer and orchestra that when Mme. Culp acknowledged the beautiful obligato of Mr. Richard Strauss' "Margen," the whole orchestra seemed included. Of her singing H. T. P. wrote in the Boston Transcript, a characterization which will bear quoting as final: "Her songs expanded in her singing as though not merely the melody, the progressions, the figures, but also the creating mood and emotion were filling the listening ear. It was not as though she had set verse and composer had written music that she had mastered and that she was 'interpreting,' as the mean and puffy spirit goes to those that have heard her. It was as though she was experiencing the emotion, feeling the mood, glimpsing the picture that the verses bore, for the first time, as though she had given them the spontaneous voice of song, since no other could set free the answering impulses that they awakened in her, and as though she were doing these things with a voice and an artistry, a sensibility and a communicating fire that hid themselves in their passion of accomplishment."

So much was written in an account of a recital of lieder, the chosen and perfect medium of Mme. Culp, but it may stand for her work yesterday. What if the melodious lengths of "Adelaide" might be longer from other lips, or that Schubert's "Ständchen" has been heard? What if one did not respond quite so surely to the emotions of the "Ave Maria" in a hundred other recitals? Was it not the wonder and the glory of Mme. Culp that, knowing all these things, her songs still existed for us when she sang them in something like purity and freshness and naivete?

With the orchestra one becomes too familiar, perhaps, to understand that its soul breaks for each week's work. Yesterday the overture was Gluck's "Alceste," the middle piece a set of variations by Brahms and the symphony that popular "From the New World" which so expressed Negro life and feeling that bits of it were mercilessly used as themes for a drama of 1885, and later. All were well played, although certain chords seemed to play only periodically, atoning in one section for deficiencies in another. A usual one must mention the strange beauty of the winds and the certain brilliance of the strings. And one cannot forget Mr. Stokowski's lightning and energy and fire in all which is either romantic or racy of the people. Dvorak, one takes it, is both. G. S.

LOUIS MANN REFLECTS

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Here we have one brigade of the Triangle forces preparing amusement for the patrons of the Arcadia. Director Paul Powell and his assistants are working out a problem in Marie Doro's new film, "The Wood Nymph," which will be seen here next week. Miss Doro is at the harp.