

GERALDINE FARRAR APPEARS AS ZAZA

First Performance Here of Leoncavallo's Opera by Metropolitan Company

ZAZA. Leoncavallo's opera... The cast includes Geraldine Farrar, Francesco Invernizzi, and others.

"Zaza," the opera of Ruggiero Leoncavallo, which has been "threatened" a long time by the Metropolitan Opera Co., but which has finally come to pass this season, was given its first performance in Philadelphia last evening.

The plot of the opera differs in its outcome both from the original story of Beron and Simon and from the Italian version made famous on the stage by Mrs. Leslie Carter some years ago. Otherwise the opera follows closely both versions. It is a "one-person" opera in so far as the action is concerned, but there are several large vocal parts in it, those of Casca and Dufresne, besides Zaza.

Plot and character are those in which Miss Farrar appears to the best advantage, besides which after the first act her voice was more resonant and in generally better shape than it has been for some time in her Philadelphia appearances. Mr. Crimi made his first appearance of the season as Dufresne and sang well throughout, especially the aria "O Mio Piccolo Tavoio" at the beginning of the third act and in the great scene with Zaza at the close of the opera. Mr. Amato also made his first Philadelphia appearance since he retired to rest his voice. His aria, "Zaza Piccola Zingara," in the fourth act was much applauded.

The cast is very large, and most of the parts are unimportant, with the exception of Anacleto, the bibulous mother of Zaza, well taken by Kathleen Howard, and Toto, the child, played by little Miss Ada Quintina. Leoncavallo has avoided a difficult situation by having

of the part of Toto entirely declamatory, and it was well spoken and splendidly acted by the child, who was natural and modest in her stage bearing. She responded to a curtain call alone at the close of the third act, after appearing before the curtain with Miss Farrar and the other members of the cast.

Musically, "Zaza" is by no means the equal of "Pagliacci," and there is much in it that is reminiscent of that concise, effective opera, "Zaza" loses in dramatic effectiveness by reason of the last act being too long for the high tension required in it. There are some excellent arias and scenes, especially in the first, third and last acts, the second being decidedly the weakest of the four. Leoncavallo has not a great deal of versatility as a composer and he treats the voices in a manner very similar to "Pagliacci," the baritone part, for example, like that of Tonio being almost altogether in the upper register.

Still the work as a whole has a sufficient number of fine parts in it to make it well worth hearing occasionally, but it is not always an easy condition to meet. The score is not complicated and the orchestration is neither elaborate nor effective. The best elements of the work are the number of fine arias for various voices and the immense dramatic possibilities of the part of Zaza; the worst features are the lack of consistent musical values throughout and an inclination to sustain the climaxes too long.

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HODGE, DRAWLING AND DROLL, IS BACK

Star in "Guest of Honor" Pleases Lyric Audience. Mantell's Hamlet

"The Man From Home" has come back again, and the legion of his admirers here dozed to greet him. The same gentleman who goes under the alias of William Hodge arrived at Lyric after being snowed out and forced to postpone his opening till last night.

Mr. Hodge's newest play, "The Guest of Honor," not only has him in its leading role, but also claims him as author and director. To be perfectly candid one can truthfully say that "as a dramatist William Hodge is a fine actor."

On the other hand, Hodge was Hodge, typically, minutely and thoroughly. And the crowded house seemed perfectly satisfied to accept a rather trite play in a generous spirit because of the charm of the star. Time-worn passages of pathos (sometimes bathos) in the second act were saved by grace

of Hodge, not once but often. His scenes with little Graham Lucas, a most naive and natural small boy, were almost worth the price of admission, and there were many other agreeable and touching bits of sentiment and good humor.

Mr. Hodge's drawl, his stammer and his calm poise have not deserted him, and still produce droll and delightful effects. At times the beholder could not help but look to see the "Grand Duke" of "The Man From Home" appear upon the stage at any minute so that the two could play one of their delicious scenes together, but here is no "Grand Duke," only a garret and numerous "comic relief" characters who do their best with lines sometimes too frayed to be funny.

The company that surrounds Mr. Hodge with a few exceptions is not up to the standard of the star; but, then, for that matter neither is the play, except in so far as it is fitted to his personality. It is Hodge that counts, anyway.

Mr. Mantell in "Hamlet" Mr. Mantell's adequate production of "Hamlet" and his own efficient impersonation of the Dane are tolerably familiar to Philadelphia playgoers. Both are well enough liked to have filled the broad last night with an interested audience which noted little variations from prior occasions when proceedings and personalities were the same. When both are to be commended merely as

competent, of course, it is the true and lovely poetry and the authentic and searching philosophy of Shakespeare that thrill and fill an audience as that last night was thrilled and filled, moved and lifted.

The outstanding distinction that differentiated this presentation from its predecessors was the unusually low pitch to which the star attuned his dramatic and vocal keys. In times past Mr. Mantell has often thought he was playing upon the old school "apron" stage, instead of upon the modern "picture-frame" stage, and his delivery reached the ears of the groundlings roundly if not rantingly; but his newer method, be it to conserve strength, or be it an awakened artistic conscience, is highly effective.

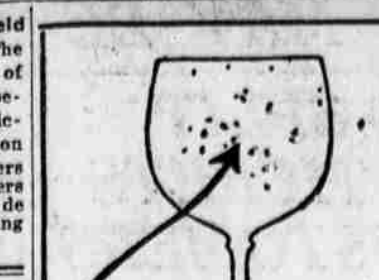
One always feels he is striving to the utmost of his limitations to express the conventionalities and traditions of Hamlet, holding nothing in reserve, instead of trying to repress, as Hamlet most assuredly would, swelling passions and outraged feelings from constantly riding at floodtide. Hamlet, therefore, is not one of the best of Mr. Mantell's roles, theatrically effective though it is; for his talent is robustly romantic and melodramatic, rather than imaginatively poetic. Tonight as Lear he will reveal one of his genuinely effective impersonations. This afternoon Fritz Leiber will essay Romeo and Genevieve Hamper Juliet. Respectively, they were the Laertes and Ophelia of the "Hamlet," Henry Buckler was a guileful and slyly humorous Polonius.

At Last! A Spanish Cabinet Upheld Madrid, Feb. 18.—(By A. P.)—The Spanish Government received a vote of confidence in the Cortes, the result being 120 to 13. The effect of this victory, however, was called into question by the fact that all Catalan members and the followers of former Premier Romanones and Maura and of Juan de la Cierva left the room before balloting began.

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