

CHALIAPIN MASTER FIGURE OF OPERA

"Mefistofele" Gives Metropolitan Season Most Successful Opening in Years

AUDIENCE BRILLIANT ONE

The Philadelphia season of the Metropolitan Opera Company opened at the Academy of Music last evening with what was perhaps the most perfect operatic performance that this city has ever witnessed. "Mefistofele" was the production. It was sung before an audience of exceptional brilliancy, even to the opening Metropolitan night.

Both before the performance and after there was the usual "shouting and the tumult" which is supposed to and generally does accompany any great social event, but when the work began these sounds died more rapidly even than in the Kinging classic. The audience was there to hear the opera above everything else, and it did.

Chaliapin Dominated Cast Musically, the work was the best that has been presented in this city for many years. The gigantic figure of Chaliapin not only towered above all the other giants of the cast, but actually inspired them to efforts unknown heretofore in technique and spirit. This, with the added scenic and lighting effects, which have never been equalled even by the Metropolitan Company, in Philadelphia, gave a presentation which will become history in Philadelphia opera.

It is not too much to say that Chaliapin was the whole show. From the moment of his dramatic appearance in the prologue to the closing scene he dominated the situation wherever he appeared. Dominant as Boris, he is still greater as Mefistofele. Situated after situation revolved around his marvelous personality, and he showed himself to be the real master in what is commonly known as a "title role". Usually, he was as superb as he was in characterization and in dramatic effect. He acted where acting was required and he sang where vocal effect was demanded, but never he dominated the opera. He had the unique vocal quality of appearing as almost a tenor voice where the dramatic situation required it and as a basso when that quality was required. To select the special portions of the opera where he was "at his best" would simply mean to detail the several numbers in turn. He was at his best all the time.

One of the most effective things which he did was the mystery with which he enveloped the role and always without any apparent effort. An effort would have ruined the effect, but it was never apparent. He had only to appear on the stage to command the attention of the audience, but, however, without in any way detracting from the roles in evidence.

It is difficult to make a critical estimate of a work so perfectly presented. Mr. Chaliapin always dominated the role demands, but he was never in undue evidence; everything was disclosed in a perfect sense of proportion, and this is the greatest art of operatic presentation.

Second to him was Mr. Giddi, who appeared as Faust, his second appearance in this role, the first being his Philadelphia debut two years ago. His voice was never in finer condition than last evening and the role is especially adapted to the vocal quality which he possesses in such rich measure.

Mrs. Ada was a splendid Marguerite and showed to especial advantage in the prison scene, when she received many recalls, which Mr. Chaliapin, after two or three, refused to acknowledge, leaving them to the heroines of the scene. Frances Forster, Flora Perini and Giordano Patrinoir did their roles superbly.

Ballet Ensemble Well Done A splendid feature of the performance was several ballets arranged by Mme. Galli. She has made several changes since the last performance of the opera here. Then there were a number of highly individual ballets; last night everything was ensemble. The famous Brookes scene was a riot of unrest, dominated by Mefistofele, a sinister but splendid figure and creating the atmosphere commonly associated in the popular mind with that unhappy region. The dances were magnificently conceived and carried out with a conviction rare in such presentations, even the minor whispings of the ballet and chorus being somber and impressive, a long opera.

Scrambled Eggs with Minced Ham
Crisp the ham a little before putting the eggs in the pan. When done sprinkle with

LEA & PERRINS' SAUCE
THE ORIGINAL WORCESTERSHIRE

The scenery and stage settings were magnificent. Each seemed to be designed to create in the minds of the audience the special emotion to be portrayed in the music and the action. Mr. Moranzoni conducted with rare skill, experienced as he is, and seemed to be inspired by the gigantic personality of Mr. Chaliapin.

It is true that there were spots here and there where more accuracy of pitch would have been desirable, especially in the superb duet of Marguerite and Faust in the first scene of the third act, as well as the chorus effect of the prologue. But these minor deficiencies were entirely lost sight of in the general ensemble, to which all the participants seemed to be working.

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READY FOR MAIL RUSH
Postmaster Hopes Christmas Packages Will Come in Early
Postal authorities prepared yesterday to handle the holiday rush of mail matter due this week. Postmaster Keap asked that citizens do their Christmas mailing early and thus prevent congestion.

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Store Closed To-morrow Thanksgiving Day

THE President, the Governor and the Mayor have officially set apart the last Thursday of November as a day of thanksgiving. Therefore, this Store will be closed all day to-morrow.

Let us recall that first public Thanksgiving Day of the Pilgrims three hundred years ago. When the fruits of the harvest were gathered in, a company was sent out in search of game for a great feast. After a long period of privation and hunger, their labors had been blest, so they met together with reverence and thankfulness "for the good world and the good things in it."

The national observance of the day is much the same now—with feasting and thanksgiving. But how much more we have to be thankful for! When we think of the Pilgrims, we can the more fully appreciate the, innumerable bounties bestowed upon us.

Ours is a land of unlimited resources, of countless wealth, of constant plenty—despite the inevitable productive and distributive disturbances, the aftermath of war, from which we have practically recovered. Business is on a solid footing. Nearly everybody has work to do. Our own business is increasing; more people are able to buy needed merchandise than a year ago. We have opened 8157 more new charge accounts this year than in the same period last year.

NOTE—The Thanksgiving Service at the Arch Street Presbyterian Church, from 10:45 to 12 o'clock to-morrow, will be broadcasted through Station W F I (400 metres wave length). No broadcasting to-morrow afternoon or evening.

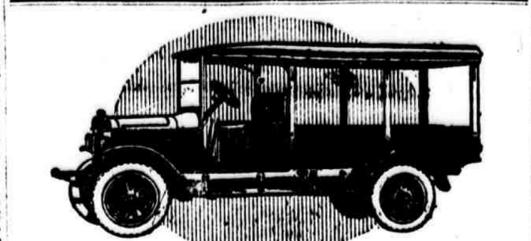
Son and daughter home from college, little sister and brother with an extra holiday to enjoy—usually utilize the Friday after Thanksgiving for the selection of new clothes. We have prepared many unusual attractions in needed apparel for children especially for Friday. Details will appear in to-morrow's evening newspapers.

In order to acquaint more men with the surpassing merits of Wickham Clothes, we have decided to mark our entire reserve stock of Wickham Suits at one-third less than usual prices. The Suits will be ready Friday morning. The Sale prices will be \$22.00, \$29.50 and \$32.50. See to-morrow's evening newspapers for details.

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