

# Mme. Aino Ackte Says New York Gets The Best Grand Opera In The World

SKETCHES BY ERNEST HASKELL



## Finnish Prima Donna Also Declares Sembrich the Greatest of Prima Donnas—New York Society More Hospitable than That of Paris Toward Artists—Ackte an Exception in the French Capital Because She Is "An Honest Woman."

MME. AINO ACKTE seemed all arms and—ahem!—as she swayed forward with outstretched hand and a sweep of skirts. There is a prodigality of movement about the Finnish fair one which makes most of Herr Coarled's other prima donnas look like stultes in still life. Heaven and the opera-goer know that the angular and altitudinous ackte looks tall and sinuous enough on the big opera-house stage. Distance doesn't lend enchantment, but it borrows a lot from the closer view. To see Madame at the Collingwood is to be impressed more and more with the necessity of skyscraper apartment hotels. She was established on the tenth floor. I found myself wondering whether she used the elevator or just stepped up and down. It was impossible to shake off the idea that in choosing her apartments she had carefully measured the distance.

Meanwhile she sat me in one, two, three chairs before she was satisfied that she had found the one which fitted me best. Then she beamed upon me and chortled, "I am so foolish to-day!"

To my mild, perhaps timorous, glance of inquiry she answered: "This morning I go to a rehearsal of 'Die Fledermaus.' We, every one, was foolish. Yes, gay, that is it. We all dance—ah!—swinging half about—and we laugh ver' much. To-night it will be fun."

"Do you like to sing for nothing?" I innocently asked.

"Oh, yes," was the naive reply. "It was in my contract to give Meester Coarled a benefit."

And it was not so long ago that most of Meester Coarled's "talent" were hardly willing to give him even the benefit of the doubt!

THE evolt one was much happier than when she told me her troubles last year. She was shivering then under the criticism that she was "cold." Her Marguerite had made humanitarians feel that Faust ought to have been provided with a fur-lined overcoat. But there's been a change in the weather since then. Little by little, Ackte has thawed, until she is now a warm favorite.

"My two seasons here do me much good," she acknowledged. "An American engagement is a gr-r-eat thing for a European singer. You are much better when you go back. Why, you say? Because here is the most beyewtsefulest opera company in the world. Oh, yes, nowhere is there such a company. In Europe they know this. And if an artiste succeed here they think much more of her than they did before. It makes her reputation to be accepted in America. They know America demands and gets the best. Why? Because it has got the money."

There's nothing slim about the Ackte laugh. It came out robust and every here. Perhaps she imagined she had perpetrated the Americanism "because it has got the price."

"Even the gr-r-eatest singer realizes the value of an American engagement," she added.

"And who, in your opinion, is the greatest singer?"

"Sembrich," she immediately answered. "Ah! there is only one Sembrich. In Europe she is recognized as the greatest of all. Sembrich is a bird!"

This wasn't slang—it was serious.

NOW that Mme. Ackte has won her American plumes she is disposed to be a bit haughty. She sails on the 25th, perhaps not to return.

"I shall not come back next season," she said, "unless my contract in—give me the word," snapping her fingers impatiently, "insures—yes, that is it—unless my contract insures that I sing twice a week. Now I sing two or three times, maybe four, a week, and then I do not sing again for ten or twelve days. I do not like that—choo!"

This was not an imitation of an air-brake. It was the Ackte method of expressing exhausted patience. How it must amuse the children at home when they play "train!"

"I shall stay in Helsingfors one week only. Then I start on my tour-

ney. I will go to Berlin, Dresden, Prague, Budapest, Vienna, Bucharest and other cities. For two months it will be, and I will sing many roles. My favorite one? Oh, Marguerite I like best. There is so much in the development of the simple girl into the tragic woman. To stay longer at home I should like, but I could not stay there always—oh, not—and sing only to myself. It would make me very sorry to sing to myself. There would be the yearning for the great world; to sing to great throngs of people. No, it would not be the applause I would crave. It would be the longing to give to the world what I have to give that I would feel."

Madame threw out her arms as if to take in the world. Those wonderful arms made me feel for the moment that she would succeed.

THERE wasn't any use trying to dissuade Ackte from going. When it was mentioned that two ocean liners had arrived that morning sheeted with ice, she turned with rapture in her eyes and exclaimed: "Ah! see not the ice-beyewtseful!"

I couldn't share her ecstacy, but refrained from telling her that the ice in a highball was enough to suit me.

But even though the frail and fragile Ackte is willing to sail away in a ship of ice, please don't think that she isn't the least bit sorry to leave us.

"There will be pain here," she said, pressing her chest. And then, by way of hasty explanation of her position—the way she was sitting, I mean—she interrupted herself with: "When I talk I am like these"—telescoping herself with a grimace—"but when I act, ah! I am these way"—straightening up and throwing back her head.

This started us talking about the acting of prima donnas, and Mme. Ackte said:

..... and remarked

..... and added

..... and exclaimed

All of which you will allow was very interesting. But this much you may hear:

"I believe the time is not far off when the operatic stage will demand of its artistes that they be as fine actors as they are singers. There is as much in the acting of a role as in the singing of it."

Of the American actresses Ackte has seen Mrs. Carter interested her most.

"I liked Mme. Carter very much," she said, "though I did not like 'Adrea.' She is very much like Sarah."

And now a few words of farewell:

"I shall regret to leave my New York friends. Last year I knew no one. But this season I go much in society. Yes, it is good for me. I love it in Paris, also, I go in society a great deal. It is difficult for the artiste to do that. But I am an exception."

"An exception here or in Paris?"

"Oh, in Paris, of course! Here all the artistes go in society. But in Paris few are asked. But as I say, I am an exception."

"Because—"

"Because," and Madame leaned forward and whispered mysteriously "because I am an honest woman."

"Which means?"

"That I am a respectable married woman."

Isn't Paris the particular place? CHARLES DARNTON.

**FIREMEN'S ANNUAL DANCE.**

Novelty Arranged for Entertainment and Reception.

Novelty in dancing will be seen to-night at the tenth annual dramatic entertainment and reception of the Eocentric Firemen, L. U. 68, in Grand Central Palace. There will be a series of national dancing preparations.

The 10,000 members of the organization, probably the strongest labor union in or about New York, and one which has proved a big factor in local amateur athletics, will be on hand to take part in a gala occasion, the receipts of which will be devoted to the association's burial fund.

Extensive preparations have been made in the decoration of the halls which have been elaborately festooned and garlanded, the national colors being prominent. Under the direction of James L. Barry, manager of the Actors' National Protective Union, a sterling programme of vaudeville entertainment has been arranged.

Willard Temperance Hospital Dedicated in Chicago.

CHICAGO, Feb. 17.—Simultaneously with the acceptance by Congress of the Frances B. Willard statue at Washington, the Frances E. Willard National Temperance Hospital, on South Lincoln street, was dedicated to-day. A memorial meeting was held in Willard Hall. The statue there was crowned with a wreath of bay leaves.

THE ANGULAR AND ALTITUDINOUS ACKTE.

Miss Marion brought slinky to-die.

WHEN I TALK, I AM LIKE THESE

WHEN I ACT, AH! I AM THESE WAY

**THE SONG THAT STOPS BABY FROM CRYING—**

Rockaby—rockaby,  
Nothing to fear—  
Good nurses through World Wants  
Always are near.

**77 NURSES WANTED.**

The present demand for nursery help will be chronic to-morrow in the

**Sunday World's Want Directory.**

**AMUSEMENTS.**

**HAMMERSTEIN'S** Victoria, 48 st. Broadway, Evs. 25, 30, 35, 40, 45.

**Maimeo Every Day, 25c. and 50c.**

Entire Change of Bill Each Week.

Every Evening Used Reserved Seats. 50c.

Jan. McCarty and his Fifth Avenue Girls.

The Little Kettle, Frank Bush, The Four Hunters, Hickey and Nelson, Hoey & Lee, The Foley Boys, Harding & Ah Sid, Mile. Oltre, W. Archibald and Others.

**BEGINNING NEXT MONDAY**

**DIDA** THE ONLY WOMAN OUT OF NOTHING

**PROCTOR'S "BIG FOUR"**

133 ST. — Zuzka, Carlotta, Babes at the Inn 5TH AV. — "The Money-Makers" & Vaude. "THE ONLY WAY" Stock Co. & Vaude. "THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD"

Ev. 8.15. Mat. Daily. 25c. Herber, Kelly & Edie Stuart. Edith Helena. The Spook Minstrels & Gilmer's Troupe. Fox & Clark. Bravos & Tussell.

**GIRGLE** Kett's

Ev. 8.15. Mat. Daily. 25c. Herber, Kelly & Edie Stuart. Edith Helena. The Spook Minstrels & Gilmer's Troupe. Fox & Clark. Bravos & Tussell.

**AMUSEMENTS.**

**Huber's 14TH MUSEUM** Visit Early Show, Avoid Crowd

**LENTINI, Three-Legged Boy.**

Capt. Titan, British Coliath, Height 7 feet 4 inches; Billy Wells Iron Skull Wonder, Marie Lili, Fat Lady, Arctus Wonder, Alphonse, Human Octopus.

**THEATRE** Double Vaudeville show, 10.15. Evening New CONCERTS SUNDAY.

**GRAND Frank Daniels** Office Sat. 11.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**LEW FIELDS** Phone 100-38. Ev. 8.15. Mat. Sat. 2.15. 4.15. 6.15. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15.

**ACADEMY OF MUSIC** 14th st. & Irving pl. MENNETTA in David Belasco's play. SWEEPER. KITTIE GILLIAMS. Popular Prices. Mat. To-day & Wed. at 2 Ev. 8.

**GRAND MASQUERADE BALL** By the Swedish Masquerade Society. Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15.

In Suber's Hall, 14th St., 127th St. 24 Av. N. Y. Valuable prizes. Tickets, 50c.

**BELASCO** Theatre, 67 St. Mat. Sat. & Feb. 22. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**LESLIE CARTER** in the New Play, ADREA.

**METROPOLIS** Ev. 8.15. Mat. Wed. & Sat. 1.15. 3.15. 5.15. 7.15. 9.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**Under Southern Skies** in 11.15.

**WARFIELD** MUSIC MASTER.

**AMERICAN** Ev. 8.15. Mat. Sat. 25 & 50c. Sunday Night. THE MARKS BIG CONCERT. Next Week—"IN OLD KENTUCKY."

**STAR** 14th St. Lexington av. & 107th St. Mat. To-day. The White Horse of Ham. Mat. To-day. Next Week—LIFE IN NEW YORK.

**JOE WEBER'S** All-Star Co. at (Mat. To-day) Mingley & Giggly & College Widower. 12.15. 22.

**AMUSEMENTS.**

**ARRIVED TO-L**

**FROM LONDON.**

The Latest European Music Hall Sensation.

**DIDA**

THE MYSTERY OF MYSTER WILL BE PRESENTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HAMMERSTEIN'S VICTORIA OF VAR

**NEXT MONDAY**

**NEW AMSTERDAM.** Ev. 8.15. Mat. Wed. & Sat. 2.15. 4.15. 6.15. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15.

**LIBERTY** Theatre, Last Matinee To-day. Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15.

**ADA REHAN** SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL. Next Mon. "The Education of Mr. Phipps."

**NEW YORK** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**WARD & YOKES** "A FAIR OF PINKS." Next Mon. "The Last of the Mohicans." Shepherd King.

**MAJESTIC** Ev. 8.15. Mat. Wed. & Sat. 2.15. 4.15. 6.15. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15.

**BUSTER BROWN** West End Theatre, 14th St. & Broadway. Mat. To-day & Wed. at 2. Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**COLONIAL** Broadway and 62d Street. "THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE." Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**PASTOR'S** 14TH ST. & B'WAY. Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**14TH ST. THEATRE.** Nights, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45. Mat. 15 & 20. Sat. Mat. 25, 30, 35, 40, 45. Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE.** Next Wk. "A New Play." "No. 100's Darling."

**Harlem** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**LYRIC.** Ev. 8.15. Mat. To-day & Feb. 22. Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**Princess.** Edward Terry in "The House of Mirth." Mat. To-day & Wed. at 2. Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**Manhattan** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**MRS. FISKE Leah Kleschna**

**ATLANTIC GARDEN.** Borey, near Bar & Evans, Day & Even. The Circus in Society Pictures, Escher's Lady Orchestra.

**THEATRE 64th St.** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**MRS. FISKE Leah Kleschna**

**BROADWAY** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**MURRAY TEXAS** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**EDEN** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**3 AV. 31 st.** Mat. To-day. Two Little Waifs. 3rd Av. Next Week—Rachel Goldstein.

**WINDSOR** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**EMPIRE THEATRE.** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**WILLARD** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**SAVOY** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**BLANCHE WALL** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**Francis W.** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**Arnold Daly's** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**LYCEUM** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**MRS. LEFFINGWELL** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**DALY'S** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**DEWEY** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**GOTHAM** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**Wallack's** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**AMPHION** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**SKATING** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**MONTA** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.

**JOHN DREW** Ev. 8.15. 10.15. 12.15. 1.15. 2.15. 3.15. 4.15. 5.15. 6.15. 7.15. 8.15. 9.15. 10.15. 11.15. 12.15.