Musical Notes & Comment

Albert Reiss and Pastry Cooks Chorus in "Cyrano"

Marie Matfeld in "Cyrano"

Putnam Griswold as De Guiche in Cyrano

The Balcony Scene in "Cyrano" Mme Alda as Roxane, Mr Amato as Cyrano and Mr Martin as Christian.

DEFENSE OF BAYREUTH

Carl Braun Says Training There Does Not Harm Voices.

There have been of recent years few operatic singers who, coming absolutely unknown to American shores, have made the instant and profound impression made by Carl Braun, the young German bass who, only two weeks ago, made his New York debut at the Metropolitan Opera House as King Mark in "Tristan und Isolde." His appearance at that time was little noticed owing to the unfortunate loss of voice sustained by Jacques Urlus, the Tristan of the evening, who was also making his first appearance at the Metropolitan. This accident completely upset the performance, and all critical comment was necessarily deferred. A few days later, however, Mr. Braun sang Pogner in "Die Meistersinger," and his magnificent voice at once won recognition. Then came his impersonations of Wotan, Sarastro, Hagen and Marcel, and immediately it dawned upon the public that a great bass had at last been found, a bass worthy in power and range of voice to be the successor of Plançon and Edouard De Reszke, and one who was, in addition, a magnificent actor and a magnificent specimens of physical manhood.

Mr. Braun stands six feet four in his stocking feet, is slender yet well proportioned, straight as an arrow, with regular features and ruddy, health marked cheeks. All in all, he has the appearance of a young English 'varsity oarsman rather than of a German opera singer, and his simple, straightforward, natural manner bears out this impression. He is only twenty-seven years old and looks even younger, though he has been on the operatic stage since he was eighteen.

CAREER OF THE SINGER.

To a Tribune representative Mr. Braun talked freely the other day of his work and his ideas.

"I was born in 1885 in Meisenheim, a little town in the Rheinland, in Germany," said Mr. Braun. "My family had nothing to do with the theatre and were bitterly opposed to my entering an operatic career. It was while I was a pupil at the high school in Wiesbaden that I began going to the theatre, and at once became interested in it. When I was sixteen I decided to study professionally, and I left school and took up vocal culture with Kammersänger Gausche in Strassburg.

"I made my debut when I was eighteen at the opera in Bad-Kreuznach in the part of Ermite in 'Der Freischütz,' singing a few days later Mephistopheles in Gounod's 'Faust.' The next season Count von Hülsen, of the Berlin Opera, engaged me, and I sang there small parts for three months, when I left to go to Wiesbaden. Shortly before Felix Weingartner left Vienna he engaged me for the Royal Opera there, but upon Mr. Weingartner's leaving I found I could not agree with the new director, Mr. Gregor, and left after an engagement of only three months. Since then my engagements have been at Bayreuth, where I sang all the big bass roles, and at 'guest' appearances at festivals and concerts.

THE CRITICISMS OF BAYREUTH.

"My appearances at Bayreuth have been especially pleasing to me. People seem to have got a wrong idea of the training evolved there. Because certain singers come from there, ignorant of legato singing, and striving only for exaggerated effects in declamation, the impression gets abroad that Bayreuth destroys good singing. The fact of the matter is that Siegfried and Cosima Wagner are only too glad to hear fine singing. These singers have not obtained their defects because these defects were demanded, but because, by finding that they could not sing as they should, they overemphasized the declamatory requirements of the Wagnerian operas.

"Some people, for instance, have wondered that my conception of Hagen was allowed at Bayreuth. They have an idea that all singers must conform to certain narrow traditions. The fact is that after working up my Hagen with Dr. Muck, and afterward by long personal study, I went to Bayreuth, where after a single rehearsal I was told to sing it as I conceived it. If a man has ideas of his own, and is serious, the powers at Bayreuth will encourage rather than restrict him.

"Hagen I consider the most difficult of all bass parts, more difficult even than Wotan. My idea of Wotan is that he is a god in dealing with Alberich and Mime, but a man when dealing with his own kin, such as Fricka and Brünnhilde. It is not right, I feel, to keep him always distant and supreme, for he is, after all, but a superman caught in his own toils and battling vainly to free himself from them.

SOME OF HIS ASPIRATIONS.

"Parts which I have never sung but which I should like to appear in are the Mephistopheles of Boito, Don Basilio, Ramfis, Boris Godunow and Ivan the Terrible. I must, however, first perfect myself in Italian. When I sang Marcel in 'The Huguenots' the other evening it was the first time I had ever sung in Italian. I can tell you I was nervous about it! Hans Sachs I shall sing when I am older, for that is a part that requires maturity.

"I am happy, indeed, to be at the Metropolitan—in most respects the greatest opera house in the world. Especially inspiring is it to be under the baton of such a genius as Arturo Toscanini, who even in Germany is considered the greatest of living operatic conductors. His 'Tristan' is a marvel. He uses no score, holding the music in his head, and this in itself is of enormous advantage. He does not have to read the music to hear it; he hears it continually, and hence can have the orchestra under more perfect control than if he had to refer continually to a score before him. A delight it is, too, to sing with such an artist as Mme. Fremstad. I shall never forget her Brünnhilde in 'Götterdämerung.' It inspires me as I never had been inspired. Such inspiration from one's fellow artist is what a singer needs, and Mme. Fremstad is supreme both as an actress and a singer. Surely we in Germany should see her, too."

AT THE METROPOLITAN

"Cyrano" Will Be Rendered Again on Friday.

"Cyrano" will have its second performance next Friday evening at the Metropolitan Opera House, with the original cast, including Mr. Amato in the title; Mme. Alda as Roxane, Mr. Martin as Christian, Mmes. Curtis, Mattfeld, Cox and Mulford and Messrs. Reiss, Murphy, Hinshaw, Griswold, Ruysdael, Pini-Corsi and Reiner. Mr. Alfred Hertz conducting.

"Die Walküre" will be sung to-morrow evening by Mmes. Gadski (Sieglinde), Matzenauer (Brünnhilde), Homer, Sparkes, Alten, Curtis, Fornia, Mulford, Robeson, Duchene and Mattfeld and Messrs. Urlus, Brawn and Ruysdael. Mr. Hertz will conduct.

"Konigskinder" will be given on Wednesday evening with Miss Farrar and Mmes. Fornia, Robeson, Mattfeld and Gasgoigne and Messrs. Jörn, Reiss, Goritz, Didur and Pini-Corsi. Mr. Hertz will conduct.

"The Tales of Hoffmann" will be given as a special performance on Thursday afternoon for the benefit of the School of Mothercraft. The cast will include Mmes. Hempel, Bori, Duchene and Maubourg and Messrs. Jörn, Gilly, Rothier, De Segurola, Reiss, Rossi, Bada, Ananian, Begue and Ruysdael. Mr. Polacco will conduct.

"Aida" will be sung on Thursday evening by Mmes. Destinn, Homer and Sparkes and Messrs. Caruso, Gilly and Didur. Mr. Toscanini will conduct.

"Tannhäuser" is billed for the Saturday matinee, with Mme. Destinn (Elizabeth) and Mme. Fremstad (Venus), and Messrs. Urlus, Buers, Griswold, Reiss, Hinshaw and Ruysdael. Mr. Alfred Hertz will conduct.

"Cavalleria Rusticana" and "Pagliacci" will be given on Saturday night at popular prices. The former opera will be sung by Mmes. Gadski, Duchene and Mattfeld and Messrs. Macnez and Gilly. Mr. Polacco conducting, while the artists in the latter will be Miss Bori and Messrs. Jörn, Amato, Reschiglian and Bada, Mr. Sturani conducting.

"Tosca" will be sung by the Metropolitan Opera Company at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Tuesday evening, with Mme. Fremstad in the title role. Mr. Caruso as Cavaradossi and Mr. Scotti as Scarpia. Arturo Toscanini will conduct.

The distinguished Belgian violinist, Eugene Ysaye, will play at to-night's opera concert, and Mme. Bernice de Pasquali and Carl Jörn will sing.

CALENDAR FOR THE CURRENT WEEK

SUNDAY—Carnegie Hall, 3 p. m., concert of the Philharmonic Society; Aeolian Hall, 3 p. m., concert by the Symphony Orchestra; 8:30 p. m., concert by the Plectrum Orchestra; Metropolitan Opera House, 8:30 p. m., popular concert; Belasco Theatre, 8:15 p. m., concert by Georges Barrère and Ernesto Consolo; Rumford Hall, 3:30 p. m., concert by the Marum-Brockway Ensemble; Eltinge Theatre, 8:15 p. m., concert by Dorothy Tove.

MONDAY—Metropolitan Opera House, 8 p. m., German opera, "Die Walküre"; Carnegie Hall, 8:15 p. m., concert by Clara Butt and Kennerley Rumford.

TUESDAY—Aeolian Hall, 8:15 p. m., concert of chamber music by the Kneisel Quartet; Carnegie Hall, 3 p. m., concert by Eugene Ysaye and Rudolph Ganz; St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, 4:10 p. m., free organ recital; Academy of Music, Brooklyn, Italian opera, "Tosca."

WEDNESDAY—Metropolitan Opera House, 8 p. m., German opera, "Königskinder"; Aeolian Hall, 8:15 p. m., concert by Arthur Whiting and the University Quartet; Rumford Hall, 8:15 p. m., concert of chamber music by the Sinsheimer Quartet.

THURSDAY—Carnegie Hall, 8:15 p. m., concert by the Philharmonic Society; Metropolitan Opera House, 2 p. m., French opera, "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," for the benefit of the School of Mothercraft; 8 p. m., Italian opera, "Aida"; MacDowell Club, 8:15 p. m., song recital by Charlotte Lund; Cooper Union, 8:15 p. m., concert by Larrère Ensemble.

FRIDAY—Metropolitan Opera House, 8 p. m., English opera, "Cyrano"; Aeolian Hall, 3:10 p. m., concert of the Symphony Society; Carnegie Hall, 3 p. m., concert of the Philharmonic Society.

SATURDAY—Metropolitan Opera House, 2 p. m., German opera, "Tannhäuser"; 8 p. m., Italian opera, at popular prices, "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "Pagliacci"; Aeolian Hall, 3 p. m., pianoforte recital by Max Pauer; Carnegie Hall, 3 p. m., pianoforte recital by Leopold Godowsky; Academy of Music, Brooklyn, 2:30 p. m., concert for young people by the New York Symphony Orchestra.

SCHOLA CANTORUM.

Percy Grainger's British folk music choral settings, which are dedicated to the memory of Edward Grieg, will be a novel feature of the next concert of the Schola Cantorum on March 12. These old English songs, which have recently been brought to light by the researches of scholars like Cecil Sharp and Mary Neal and have been so attractively sung in New York by the Misses Fuller, are arranged for full chorus—six part—by Percy Grainger, a rising young composer of London, and have been the vogue in England during the last few years.

A novel effect is obtained in the choral arrangement of an old Irish tune which is sung without words in rich and varied harmonies. Other numbers in this group will be the old ballad "I'm Seventeen Come Sunday," the melody of which forms the principal theme in the finale of John Powell's violin concerto, and a humorous setting of the song "King Arthur Had Three Sons," arranged by Rutland Boughton and first performed at the Leeds Festival in 1907.

NEW YORK SYMPHONY SOCIETY

The new symphony of Sibelius, the Finnish composer, which the Symphony Society of New York, Walter Damrosch, conductor, will present at the concert at Aeolian Hall to-day, has somewhat puzzled its European critics. It was conducted by its composer at a festival in Birmingham, England, last October, in the same concert at which Sir Edward Elgar brought out his "The Music Makers." The remainder of the concert will be all Mozart, and so will husband the listener's energies for the Sibelius symphony. The ballet music from "Les Petits Riens" will open the concert, after which Arthur Hartmann will play Mozart's Sixth Violin Concerto, in E flat major.

For the concerts of March 7 and 9 there will be two soloists, John McCormack, tenor, and Gustave Lengeneus, clarinet. The symphony will be Tschaikowsky's No. 4.

THE KNEISEL QUARTET.

The Kneisel Quartet will give the fifth concert of its series at the new Aeolian Hall on Tuesday evening. Clarence Adler, the assisting artist, will take part in the Brahms trio in B major for pianoforte, violin and violoncello, Op. 8 (new version).

The programme opens with the quartet in F major, Op. 18, No. 1, by Beethoven (1770-1827), which, although it now appears as the first of the six quartets that comprise Op. 18, was without doubt the second of the set in order of composition. The quartet No. 3 was in reality the earliest.

The quartet in E flat major by Max Reger, of which the larghetto and the last movement will be played, is one of the latest works of the composer.

PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA.

Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony will be Josef Stransky's chief offering in the programme of the Philharmonic Society

Continued on third page.

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