

IN THE WORLD OF MUSIC AND ART

Opera Under the Soviet

By Grenville Vernon

In music as in many other things this is the slack and foolish season. Therefore we can let our thoughts drift and circle and eddy without regard to time, place or even sense. We are in the summer doldrums. So we can talk of Bolsheviki and Moscow and Chaliapine.

Word has been received from Moscow that opera is flourishing under the Soviet rule, and that the great Chaliapine is a sort of operatic czar. The story goes—for all is story which comes from Russia these latter days—that the artists of the Soviet opera are for the first time in their operatic history barren of troubles, veritable lambs in the fold of the shepherd. The reason for this is simple. Chaliapine gives an order—if any one disobeys it his salary ceases for that week. The order is again given; if the refractory one still proves recalcitrant he goes to jail with the executioner, always ready, if needed, around the corner. Thus the great Theodore Chaliapine enforces discipline, and thus does opera bud and blossom as never before under the oriflamme of the proletariat. At least so we are assured by various persons who have heard some one say who had seen some one who had seen in Moscow.

Now we can believe this if we wish. It sounds very beautiful and very simple, perhaps altogether too simple for this complicated world. Also we hear that all the artists are paid the same amount—a living wage. We should like to have Mr. Caruso's opinion on this point—as to whether Moscow would prove attractive to him. Perhaps when the whole world is Soviet-

ized Mr. Caruso will be put in chains and in chains placed upon the Moscow stage and bidden to sing "Una Furtiva Lagrima." That will be an interesting occasion, especially if the genial Mr. Peters happened to be seated in a stage box. Moscow may be a paradise for the standees and for Mr. Chaliapine, but we have our doubts about the artists on the stage.

Then our thoughts drift back to our own country and begin to evolve a Sovietized Metropolitan Opera House. Of course the golden-horseshoe is no more and there being no millionaires there is no one to pay the bills. The entrance fee being within the reach of all and the seats being allotted in inverse ratio to the patron's previous importance, these bills are of course enormous. To pay them the management must milk the artists, who will sing after the manner of discontented singers. In the words of our immortal Mr. Briggs it will be "a grand and glorious feeling" to attend the opera in Soviet days, to pay 10 cents, to wear overalls and sit in the orchestra while the tenor sings fat and the soprano sharp. Discipline will have—that is, except among the audience. In these days the proletariat will have been trained in self-expression. We can imagine the comment at a performance of "Aida" of a former patron of burlesque who has strayed into the opera, inveigled there by the low price of seats. There will surely be interest in the orchestra if not in the doings on the stage.

It is nonsense we are talking—but then Chaliapine does reign in Sovietized Moscow—and this is the silly season.

On Tuesday, operatic night, Marie Louise Wagner, soprano, and Zanco de Primo, tenor, will be the soloists. Weber's "Freischütz," Wagner's "Lohegrin," Massenet's "Le Cid" and Bizet's "Carmen" will be among the operas represented. Ilya Schkolnik, concert master, will play the "Meditation" from "Thaïs."

On Wednesday night Henry Hadley, American guest conductor, will direct his own works, "Tone Poem," "Lucifer," and the "Ballet of the Flowers," a composition inspired by a flower garden on the Palisades. Mr. Hadley will contribute other numbers with American titles written in America. Inez Barbour, soprano (Mrs. Henry Hadley), will be the soloist. She will sing Godard's aria "Le Tasse." Dvorak's "New World" symphony will also be played.

On Thursday night a work of Henry Hadley will again be the programme, his symphony No. 4, "North, East, South and West." Wagner, Borlitz, Rubinstein and Tchaikowsky are other composers on the programme. Beatrice Ragdale, pianist, will be the soloist in Rubinstein and Tchaikowsky numbers.

On Friday, opera night, Earle Tuckerman and the Stadium Quartet will assist. The operas to be played are "Tannhäuser," "Traviata," "Pagliacci," "Faust," "Raymond," Strauss's "Blue Danube" waltz and Rubinstein's "Bal Costume" will be other numbers.

Saturday will be popular night, with Florence Macbeth, soprano, as soloist. Grieg, Halvorsen, Liszt, Waldteufel, Borodin, Puccini and Suppé will be the composers of the evening. The ballet music and chorus from Borodin's "Prince Igor" will be featured, with the Metropolitan Opera chorus assisting.

Sunday night, July 20, will bring the return engagement of Forrest Lamont, American tenor, of the Chicago Opera Company. Grace Kerns, American soprano, will be the other soloist. Music from Goldmark's "Shakuntale," Verdi's "Rigoletto," Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries," Saint-Saëns' "Dance Macabre," Wagner's "Meistersingers" and works by Rubinstein complete the programme.

Variety Marks Concerts Of the Week at the Lewisohn Stadium

To-morrow will be French Night at the Lewisohn Stadium. The ballet music and chorus from Saint-Saëns's "Samson et Dalila" and compositions by César Franck, Debussy and other French composers will be given in honor of Bastille Day. Anna Fitzu, soprano, will be the soloist. The Metropolitan Opera chorus also will appear.

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AMONG THOSE PRESENT AT THE STADIUM THIS WEEK

Florence Macbeth, soprano

Anna Fitzu, soprano

Henry Hadley, conductor-composer

Grace Kerns, soprano

Ilya Schkolnik, violinist

Inez Barbour, soprano

last week numbered 21,000 persons, and on Wednesday, July 2, the attendance was over 25,000. The enthusiasm increases each night, also, and the applause seems greatest for the music of the masters. The music of Wagner has met with particular favor. These performances are not alone attracting the general public, but hundreds of musicians in attendance nightly. The services of the New York Military Band are being sought constantly, and it is probable that a tour of the United States soon will be arranged, as inquiries are coming from all of the large cities in the country.

On Monday, July 7, the band played at the country home of John D. Rockefeller in honor of his eightieth birthday. Philip Berolzheimer has engaged the services of the band for a concert at Poe Park this afternoon, in order to give the people of the Bronx an opportunity of hearing this remarkable organization.

To-morrow night there will be a special French programme in honor of Bastille Day, when Massenet's "Phédre," Bizet's "Carmen," Gounod's "Faust," Massenet's "Thaïs" and Planquette's "Chimes of Normandy" will be played. The French march, "Sambre et Meuse," and "La Marseillaise" also will be performed in honor of the occasion. Ernest S. Williams will be soloist.

On Wednesday the programme will include Beethoven's "Egmont" overture, Gounod's "Ave Maria," Wagner's "Parsifal" and other numbers by Saint-Saëns and Scharwenka.

On Friday, July 13, there will be another special Tchaikowsky programme (by request), including the "Marche Slave," 1812 Overture and "Symphonie Pathétique." The second part of the programme will include "Three Dances" from "Henry VIII," by German; excerpts from "The Gondoliers," by Sullivan, and Liszt's Second Hungarian Rhapsody.

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Tues. 15th—Marie Louise Wagner, soprano; Zanco de Primo, tenor.

Wed. 16th—Henry Hadley, guest conductor; Inez Barbour, soprano.

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A Boston Exhibition

Summer visitors to New England who pass through Boston have the opportunity of seeing an exhibition of portraits by artists who painted in Colonial times, at the Vose Galleries. This exhibition, which will continue all summer, is of especial significance just now because of the interest that has become manifest in the last few years among art lovers in the works of the early American group, who flourished in the very dawn of the nation's artistic awakening. Though many regard these productions as somewhat crude, the connoisseur knows that the work of the better Colonial portrait painter has great charm; that it sometimes has a refinement of color that is of the very essence of great art and that nearly always there is a faithfulness of characterization which makes the portraits intensely interesting from an historical as well as a patriotic standpoint.

Together there are twenty-four pictures in the Vose Galleries exhibition, ranging in period all the way from J. Blackburn, who was born in 1700 and who painted until 1765, ten years before the start of the Revolution, down to Thomas Sully, who did his best work in the first part of the last century. The Blackburn portraits, life-size representations of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Cutts, members of the highest circle of the Colonial aristocracy, are of special interest. Samuel Cutts was a sea merchant of Portsmouth, and his ships went to China and the Orient for trading purposes. He was very wealthy and his home was one of the show places of Portsmouth. He was a revolutionary patriot, and it was to him that Paul Revere gave the letters of warning to the patriots. His wife, the subject of the other portrait, was Anna Holyoke, daughter of the tenth president of Harvard College.

These portraits by Blackburn are beautiful in color, the tones being quiet and refined. The poses are natural and the characterization is careful and convincing. They show that Blackburn, the earliest artist, undoubtedly had great influence on Copley, and that he was superior to the latter in some ways.

Another fine pair of Colonial portraits is that of Thomas Dongan and his wife, by John Woolston, who painted about 1750. Thomas Dongan

was a great-nephew of the first British Governor of New York, and the artist has portrayed him resplendent in a great white satin waistcoat embroidered in gold. His wife appears as a proud lady of quality, attired in glistening white and green satin, a rose and bunch of pansies at her breast, on her lap a King Charles spaniel and in the background a landscape with stately poplars.

Another notable pair is that of Daniel Rea, by Joseph Badger (1708-1765), and his wife, by John Singleton Copley (1737-1815). Then there is a heroic "Portrait of the Duke of York" by Benjamin West (1738-1820), an American artist who went to England and became president of the Royal Academy, succeeding Reynolds. The Duke appears in the uniform of an admiral, in ceremonial armor, with ermine cloak and blue sash. He holds a seaglass in his hand and in the background is the ocean with warships. By West also is "The Eagle Bringing the Cup of Water to Psyche," a grandiloquent theme in the English heroic style.

Earliest of all the portraits is the one of Leonard Calvert, Lord Baltimore, the first Governor of Maryland. Its authorship is unknown, but it resembles the work of Daniel Mytens and is probably English in origin.

A section of the exhibition is given over to the successors of the Colonial masters, the sterling early Americans who followed them. There are four subjects by Thomas Sully (1782-1872), including "The Spanish Mantilla" and "Portrait of Miss Marjorie Richings," both brilliant works characterized by the pleasant faces and beautiful decorative color of this artist. There is a portrait of William Bainbridge, American naval hero, by Charles L. Waldo (1783-1862), and a portrait of Colonel Thomas Hart Benton, Kentuckian, who emigrated to Missouri and became United States Senator, by Matthew Jouett (1788-1827), a Kentucky artist.

Outside the realm of portraiture is "The Battle of Dunkirk," by Copley, a very large picture, with all the action that characterizes the English manner of depicting a battle scene. There is carnage and victory and waving banners outside the walls of Dunkirk. The English wear the faces of heroes while the French are portrayed as more or less ruffians.

McCormack and Other Opera Stars to Sing At Police Field Days

John McCormack was the first to send word to Frederick A. Wallis, Fourth Deputy Police Commissioner, that he will entertain at the Police Field Days, Saturday, July 13, and Sunday, July 28, at Speedway Park, Sheepshead Bay. Mr. McCormack will sing several of the songs that have

JOHN McCORMACK

Who Will Sing at the Police Field Days

for him so many admirers. He also has volunteered to sing whatever the vast assemblage requests.

Rosa Ponselle and Della Baker, of the Metropolitan Opera Company, and Ricardo Stracelli, barytone of the Chicago Opera Company, will also appear at the great carnival for the benefit of the Police Relief Fund. Naham Franko and his orchestra will accompany the opera singers, the Police Glee Club of 100 voices and 2,000 members of the People's Liberty Chorus led by L. Camilleri, assisted by Miss Isabel Lowden.

Music Notes

Helene Kanders, formerly of the Metropolitan Opera Company, who made her first concert appearance in New York at Carnegie Hall last November, will make a transcontinental tour this season, beginning at Carnegie Hall in November.

Madame Marguerita Sylva will sing another season in vaudeville by arrangement with B. F. Keith booking office and the Orpheum Circuit. Her engagement will commence next month at the Orpheum Theatre, San Francisco, and terminate in April at the Palace Theatre in New York.

Ethel Newcomb, the American concert pianist, has established a summer school at Whitney Point, N. Y., where she has a summer home, and will remain there until the commencement of her concert season in December.

The opera comique company from the Gaite Theatre in Paris, which is to be heard for a brief season in New

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