LONDON'S PLAYS AND MUSIC.

RICHARD STRAUSS, FOR ILL OR GOOD, A MUSICAL ENCHANTER.

His Powers Those of a Modern Merlin—Arthur Symons's New Play About Tristan and Isolde—A New Theatrical Skit by Bernard Shaw and Other Pieces Produced by the Stage Society.

In Mr. W. B. Yeats's newly published volume, "Ideas of Good and Evil," there appears this characteristic passage: "Have not poetry and music arisen, as it seems, out of the sounds the enchanters made to help their imagination to enchant, to charm, to bind with a spell themselves and the passers by? These very words, a chief part of all praises of music or poetry, still cry to us their origin." The Irish mystic poet is writing of magic and I could not help applying his words to Richard Strauss, who whether for ill or good is a musical enchanter, perhaps the initiator of new art—musical symbols. After hearing again his "Till Eulenspiegel" at a supplementary concert of the festival, and conducted by the composer, I was more than ever impressed by the idea that Strauss is diverting music into psychologic channels, moulding its plastic forms into shapes that are vital, so intense is their personal appeal. Since primitive man howled his lays to the moon the art of music has become in every age more and more definitive; even the classic masters were not content to play alone with tonal arabesques, but sought to impress upon their bars a definite mood. In Beethoven the passion for articulating his meanings literally recreated music. When Wagner found that he had nothing new to say, he resorted to an old device—he wedded his music to words.

Richard Strauss has now taken up the chain, the last links of which were so patiently forged by Franz Liszt. He has at his command all the old enchantments of music; he can woo and ravish the ear and command the tempests; but this is not enough. He would have his art still more definite, his message still more articulate. He is a thinker, a philosopher as well as a poet, and deeply religious in the cosmical sense; he purposes no less a task than the complete subjugation of men's imagination by his art. He is the modern Merlin, and whether for good or evil—for who may care to say?—his powers are those of a musical enchanter. Notes, phrases, groups, movements, masses of tone, no longer occupy the same relative position in his works, they are no longer merely sensuous symbols, but the actual symbols of a language we must hasten to learn, a new speech which relates in wonderful tones wonderful things. Tschaikowsky aimed at this definiteness, but his passionate, emotional nature clouded the workings of his intellect. Strauss, too, has had the seven devils of sensuality in his mansion, but has exorcised them by sheer force of a great spiritual nature—the man is a spiritualist, a seer in the broader meanings of those much degraded terms. The vision of approaching death in his "Don Quixote" could have been conceived only by one for whom life, the universe itself were symbols, the living garment by which we apprehend the Deity, the Eternal Enchanter.

In our shrewd categories of things intellectual and things emotional, we partition off too sharply brain and feeling, soul and body. Life is not a proposition by Euclid; nor is art. It is one of the functions of music to make us feel, another to make us think; the greatest masters have been those who made us both feel and think in one vivid moment. This Beethoven has done, Wagner has done, and now Richard Strauss. You cannot call his music frigidly intellectual, as is often the music of Brahms, nor does it relapse into such debauches of frenetic passion as Tschaikowsky's—the imperial intellect of Strauss controls his temperament. He is, like Nietzsche, a lyric philosopher, but never, like Nietzsche, will he allow the problems of life and art to overthrow his reason. In the thunders of his scores, I seem to hear the annunciation of the new dispensation of a new Evangel of art, which shall preach the beauty of the soul and the beauty of the body; life on the other side of good and evil.

Richard Platt, a young American pianist, made his London début at the supplementary Strauss concert. He played Beethoven's C minor concerto, Liszt's Hungarian Fantasia and some Chopin pieces. Perhaps the most interesting feature of this concert was the solo performance in the stalls of the only Vladimir de Pachmann, the unique "Chopinzee," and in some of his music Chopin's greatest living interpreter. He sat between Arthur Symons, the poet, and Godowsky, the piano virtuoso, who endeavored both to subdue this demon of caprice. When Mr. Platt played Chopin, De Pachmann's eyebrows disappeared into his hair, his shoulders assumed an expression of dodging a landslide. When the pianist essayed Beethoven, De Pachmann became gay. He nodded his head approvingly, spoke in many languages his praise, and was generally a spectacle for gods and men. Liszt did not please him, for Liszt is his "specialty," he thinks.

He, himself, has been playing exquisitely at his recitals and behaving in public as well as can be expected. There is no such luscious piano touch as his; it is as full of tender color, melting color, as a wood violet, and as perfumed. His *technique* is faultless, and he has the old magic when he plays the nocturnes, preludes, valses, mazurkas, études and several of the ballades; but the greater Chopin is a sealed book for this Kobold of the keyboard. And he irritates one still by his perverse bedevilling of rhythms; just as a child disembowels its doll and spills upon the floor the springs and sawdust, so De Pachmann delights in pulling apart the tender organism of a Chopin mazurka and maliciously exposing it to his audience.

The first performance in London of Edward Elgar's "The Dream of Gerontius" was given in the new Westminster Cathedral in Ambrosden avenue. This imposing structure is a devourer of tone, so, despite the chorus of the North Staffordshire District Choral Society, despite the big orchestra, the affair was a disappointment. Dr. Elgar conducted earnestly, but ineffectually. No English composer whose music I am acquainted with has planned so largely, with the exception of Fritz Delius. The difference is that Delius has usually something new to say; Elgar has not. Twenty-five years ago British composers imitated Handel and Mendelssohn—some of them are doing it yet; to-day they pattern after Schumann and Wagner, study orchestration in the style of Berlioz and Tschaikowsky, and doubtless will reach Liszt and Strauss in a decade.

Dr. Elgar has forestalled his contemporaries. He knows Liszt and knows Richard Strauss. There are many pages in "Gerontius" inspired by the former, and few are the wiser, for Liszt's religious music is a sealed book to the public and all but a handful of musicians and critics. There are effective spots in the Elgar score and some sincerely religious ones. He is doubtless a fervent Roman Catholic and his music, if compared to the bombastic and theatrical rant of Dom Perosi, is as Palestrina to Gounod; withal it is not great or original. Dr. Ludwig Wüllner, the tenor, sang in English. He is a vocal curiosity. Musical London crowds his recitals, not to enjoy the quality of his voice, which is guttural, strident, unpleasant, but to see him act his songs. He is very dramatic. He is very tall. He wears his yellow hair in a Paderewski mop, and his face is full of heavy furrows, the general expression being one of fatigued intensity. His voice penetrated the vast spaces of the Cathedral, which Cardinal Vaughan—since dead—had graciously opened for the occasion. Herr Wüllner's English diction is clear, his conception musical. The others participating were Muriel Foster, whose mezzo-soprano is rich, and Mr. Davies, the man from Wales with the *fortissimo* front name. As ever, he was bland and orotund. I have heard better choruses, better orchestras.

Weedon Grossmith's new play put on at the King's Theatre is called "The Cure." The idea is capital but the author lacked the power of developing it and introduces a sub-plot that really spoils the main theme. But there is so much fun of a rattling sort and so much movement farcical withal that one forgives Mr. Grossmith's hackneyed situations for the laughter he produces with his fresh ones. A wife, alarmed because she believes her husband is becoming a drunkard, mixes cure-powders with his whiskey. Unluckily they contain just enough strychnine to make him uncomfortable. Not alarmed by his sickness she gives him more powders until he is really ill. A friend of his tastes the whiskey, dislikes it, abuses it at his club and has it taken off the wine card. In consequence the wine merchant sues for slander. The whiskey is analyzed and the scared wife confesses her ruse—a wholly unnecessary one. The other part of the story weakens the play, for the credulous wife believes her husband to be a notorious forger and also an unscrupulous scoundrel who poisons the water supply that he may sell his mineral waters. This is too much for one farce, though it is all handled deftly and perforce mechanically enough.

The man's house is burned down by a club of fanatics called the "Do Good Society," and one scene ought to appeal to New Yorkers living near city railroads. It shows a house at the back of which trains pass and repass each other. The house rattles, furniture creaks, smoke enters whenever a window is opened. It is Crummles-like realism with a vengeance. The acting would have served an inferior play, which "The Cure" is far from being. Its dialogue is swift and neat. Mrs. John Wood was capital; so was Arthur Elred as the young prig of the "Do Good Society." He hopes to be its president some day. Pollie Emery as maid of all work was very funny. Grahame, Browne, Enid Brunton and others were well cast.

I had the rare pleasure of hearing Mr. Arthur Symons read in private parts of his new play. The theme is one that I wonder has not appealed before to dramatists, as it has drawn from Wagner his finest music, and caused two such poets as Algernon Charles Swinburne and Matthew Arnold to sing it in poetical numbers. I refer to "Tristan and Isolde." Perhaps Wagner's overwhelming music has warded off intruders. Yet it is a story the most beautiful in the world and one eminently adapted for dramatic treatment. Mr. Swinburne's setting is not suitable for stage performance and Arnold's is not a notably poetic one. Mr. Symons is one of the gifted of the younger group of English poets and his verse has always seemed to me to contain dramatic fire. He has gone back to the genuine Godfrey of Strassburg legend, which for obvious reasons Wagner could not have followed in a music drama. The two Isoldes are restored, for they make splendid foils, and the double of Tristan is brought about much more effectively than in Wagner's version. Nor is the love-potion theme handled the same. Very ingeniously does the poet contrive the tryst in the forest. The lines are dramatically pregnant, the action incessant, climaxes striking and about the whole play there is a rich, poetic atmosphere as befits such a moving theme.

The scene at the close of Act III. affords an opportunity to an actress of emotional temperament and poetic personality—unluckily for the latter-day stage, a rare combination. Julia Marlowe is an artist who would make a passionate and tender *Isolde*. And what a fascinating rôle for an actress of ambition. *Isolde!* Why there's music in the name! Sarah Bernhardt could delineate the impassioned side of the *Isolde* nature, but there is too much of rhetoric and animal passion in the work of Parisian actresses, of real poetry seldom a gleam. The love-lorn Irish princess, who so fiercely drained her dree, is the noblest figure in legend, nobler than *Brunhilde* and coequal with any of the heroic Shakesperian women. *Tristan* is an equally difficult part to portray, especially in Mr. Symons's last act. The simple yet really complex skeins of emotion he manages artistically and I need hardly tell you that his lines are lovely in music and meaning, for his is an ear exquisitely attuned to verbal harmonies. Nor is this "Tristan and Isolde" like poetic plays in general, for it was written to be acted and is not encumbered with redundant words. The action is speedy, the story skeletonized and there is abundant scope for decorative display and scenic splendor. But, as I asked the poet—where is there an *Isolde* who shall speak his lines?

An afternoon at the Imperial Theatre with the fifth production of "The Stage Society" was well worth the spending. The "Society" is in its fourth season and among its other good works has produced Ibsen's "When We Dead Awaken," "A Man of Honour," by W. Somerset Maugham; "The Good Hope," a powerful play by the Dutch dramatist H. Heijermans; "Mrs. Warren's Profession," by G. B. Shaw; "The Marrying of Ann Leete," by Granville Barker; "The New Idol," by François de Curel; "The Lady from the Sea," by Ibsen, and "Monna Vanna," by Maeterlinck. Whatever the royal censor of plays forbids, the Stage Society usually produces privately. It is the only way to get even with licensed dulness.

On this occasion a triple bill was presented, which, like most arrangements of the sort, was too much of a good thing. "The Golden Rose; or, The Scarlet Woman," the first offering, is by Ian Robertson, and proved a dreary compound of allegory and a certain crude realism. The author had evidently read much Maeterlinck—which is a good practice if you are not a dramatic writer—but not to advantage. His allegory, as he called it, bas-relief [why sculptural terms?] was confused, and if it meant to convey any particular wisdom his arrow overshot the mark. In a mediæval town, at the door of a dark house on a gloomy street, sits a woman. Over the door is a red light and the painted inscription is "*Accipio; intrate; intrate.*" The woman is garbed in scarlet. In her hand she holds a golden rose. To her come two women, an inventor, two artists but they flee her poisonous glances and baleful invitations. A student on his way to the burial of a beloved master is tempted by the lady—impersonated by handsome Lily Hanbury—and listens to her tale of woe. She loves, but slays her love daily. He peeps into the house and sees the spirits of those young men whose souls she has ruined. So far allegory. Realism enters with a snort when the student goes within the house and picks up a baby, the symbol of the woman's dead love. But the brat is alive, it stirs. To the student's horror, its features resemble his dead master. He tells the temptress this. She dies of the shock, for she has loved the Master [oh, these pretentious capitalizations!], first bidding the student to look after the baby [Love!]. As the funeral bells toll, the curtain falls on a bewildered young man, who probably makes for the nearest hospital to rid himself of his unwelcome burden. Mr. Robertson—who was in the cast—is experienced enough in stage matters to have known better.

The second piece was infinitely more clever. Its author, Mr. S. M. Fox, had a good idea, which he worked in spots, skilfully. It is the story of a spinster, aged about 35, who makes life miserable for her friends and all with whom she comes in contact. She has marriage on the brain; but is extremely unattractive, and in despair, being sentimental, she takes up plain or garden nursing. However, sentimentalism and hospital work do not go well hand in hand, and so *Miss Marsden* fiddles her time away tea drinking, querulous, her nervous system out of gear—she takes a little laudanum for insomnia—a terror to every one she meets. The scene is in Amalfi. She has been sent there for general repairs and we learn from the conversation of two young men that she has been persecuting with her sentimental attentions one of them, a youth of twenty, "ordered south" to die. He, too, is nervous, overwrought, in love with a girl he can never hope to marry, and *Miss Marsden's* solicitude drives him half mad. He tells her as much; his friend does the same; and so does the hotel doctor.

It must be confessed that the author displays considerable courage in inventing such a theme, one which could never be sympathetic to a mixed public. As a matter of record the audience assembled, the pick of London's artistic folk (I knew it by the dowdy dressing of the women and the queer looks of the men), did not catch Mr. Fox's idea and giggled most uncritically at the wrong time. The type of *Miss Marsden* had been studied from life; it is a very British one. Lone, unoccupied, her life glass running down, she throws herself at the sick lad and teases him by her misplaced solicitude. He revolts. But she learns his romance; also learns that a package sent to the hotel for him contains a revolver. In a singularly effective interview she manages to extort the weapon from him, and a promise that he will give up the idea of suicide. This she accomplishes by telling of her own futile attempt, and the suffering it caused. Her secret is on her tongue and she blurts it out, and then mortified by her unmaidenly candor—for she is painfully tall, thin and proper—she rushes away. She has lived her one great moment and there is nothing left for her but death. So she very properly—dramatically speaking—shoots herself with the revolver of the consumptive!

Madge McIntosh played the fussy, egotistical, good-hearted woman with such skill that it is wonder that she did go further and play it better. She did not allow the tragi-comic element of the character an equal chance. Perhaps that is the reason there was unseemly laughter.

The programme concluded with a clever "machine" of G. Bernard Shaw's entitled most modestly, "The celebrated drama in two tableaux and in blank verse—The Admirable Bashville, or Constancy Unrewarded." It is nothing else but the story of "Cashel Byron's Profession," put into blank verse, because, as Mr. Shaw says, blank verse is so much easier to write than good prose. It is printed at the end of the second edition of the prize-fighting novel. As there has been a dramatization made—unauthorized—for a well-known American pugilist-actor, Mr. Shaw thought that he had better protect his English interests. Hence the parody for copyright purposes. It is funny. It gibes at Shakespeare, at the modern drama, at Parliament, at social snobbery, at Shaw himself, and almost everything else within reach. The stage setting was a mockery of the Elizabethan stage, with two venerable beef-eaters in Tower costume, who hung up placards bearing the legend: "A Glade in Wiltstoken Park," &c. (even as you and I witnessed something of the kind at Mrs. Osborn's Theatre a certain night last winter). Ben Webster as *Cashel Byron* and James Hearn as the Zulu King carried off the honors. Aubrey Smith, made up as Mr. Shaw in the costume of a policeman with a brogue, caused merriment, especially at the close, when he informed his audience that the author had left the house. And so he had. He was standing at the corner when I accosted him. Our interview was brief. He warned me in grave accents and a twinkling Celtic eye never again to describe him as "benevolent." Half the beggars of London had winded the phrase and were pestering him at his back gate. Mr. Shaw still looks as if a half-raw beefsteak and a mug of Bass would do him a world of good. But who can tell? He might then lose some of his effervescence; that quality of humor so happily described by Edmund Gosse when he spoke of the *vegetable* spirits of George Bernard Shaw.

JAMES HUNEKER.

A Plague of Owls.

From the Detroit Free Press.

That the most complex and seemingly eccentric conduct is often entirely logical and simple is a fact that average humanity admits.

"I suppose," remarked a genial suburban citizen to a cluster of street car comrades, "if you all came out to our place and saw us travelling up and down the lanes in the moonlight with umbrellas over our heads, you would say we were all crazy, wouldn't you?"

"Of course," remarked a chorus of voices.

"Well, if any one of you should walk in our lane without an umbrella, after dark you would wish you hadn't."

"What ails the lane?" everybody asked. "Is it haunted by ghosts who walk only on moonlight nights?"

"Not quite," replied the citizen of the countryside; "but just now we have a curious set of conditions that might not be met with anywhere else in the whole round world. Our lane happens to be densely shaded on both sides with big forest trees. These old trees are full of owls' nests, and at this time of the year—when they have young ones in the nests, we infer—the owls are very warlike and vicious. Without a sound, except a flutter of wings, they will swoop down on an unprotected traveller through the lane at night and peck him on the head savagely. One of my boys had his head scratched until it bled, and my daughter had her hair pulled until she screamed with pain and terror. Still, we can't give the lane up altogether on these lovely summer nights, so we stroll about safely with our umbrellas hoisted. Frank Stockton advised black stockings for sharks, and to that nugget of wisdom let me add umbrellas for owls.' Our suburban neighbors understand the regulation, and all our evening guests carry hoisted umbrellas through our lane."

THEATRICAL SEASON BEGINS.

THE THIRD AVENUE THEATRE REOPENED LAST NIGHT.

The Academy of Music Starts on Thursday—Six Playhouses Open This Month—Summer Shows Doing Well—Amusements at the Beaches.

Warm weather has no longer any terrors for theatrical managers. Almost before one season is over another begins.

As usual, the first theatre to start the season of 1903-4 is one of the popular price houses. The Third Avenue opened last night with that hair-raising drama "The Game of Life."

On Thursday at the Academy of Music "The Christian" will be revived. On Saturday night the New Star reopens with a troupe of colored comedians and singers headed by the "Black Patti." A week later the Metropolis opens with "The Winning Hand."

On Aug. 17, there will be two openings, the Garrick and the Fourteenth Street Theatre. The Garrick starts with "Vivian's Papas" and the Fourteenth Street with "A Son of Rest."

The Liebler & Co. revival of "The Christian" is to be an elaborate one, made especially for a large stage like the Academy of Music. Three weeks is the time set for its stay here. Then it goes to Boston for two weeks more. Five weeks will end the season of this company, all the members of which have been especially engaged for the revival.

The cast includes Edward J. Morgan as *John Storm*, Clara Blandick as *Glory Quayle*, Thurlow Bergen as *Horatio Drake*, Harold Hartsell as *Lord Robert Ure*, George Woodward as *Archdeacon Wealthy*, Frank C. Bangs as *Father Lamplugh*, Stanton Elliot as *Brother Paul*, Clarence Handyside as the *Faro King*, Guy Nichols as *Parson Quayle*, Mrs. Georgia Dickson as *Mrs. Callendar* and Beth Franklin as *Polly Love*. Many of these performers were in the first "Christian" cast, with Viola Allen, and all the others have filled important rôles in subsequent productions of the play.

The Casino has always been a popular summer theatre and "The Runaways" is testing the capacity of the house at every performance. This playhouse is comfortable even on a hot night. Since Fay Templeton became a member of the company many new features have been added. As a summer show "The Runaways" has turned out to be a big success.

Miss Templeton, Arthur Dunn, Alexander Clark, William Gould, Charles Dox, Sol Solomon, Joseph Carey, Lottie Medley and the Hengler Sisters are the ones who contribute most materially to the rollicking fun of the big show. Among the prominent singers of the company are Amelia Stone, Van Rensselaer Wheeler, Mabel Carrier and William Wolff.

The 200th performance of "The Earl of Pawtucket" will be celebrated at the Manhattan Theatre on Wednesday evening. The occasion promises to be of more than ordinary interest as a distinguished audience is expected to attend. Among those who have been invited is Sir Thomas Lipton, Lawrance D'Orsay, the star of "The Earl of Pawtucket," is an Englishman, and Sir Thomas has expressed a desire to see him act in an American comedy.

To-morrow night The "Wizard of Oz" celebrates its 225th performance at the Majestic Theatre. There will be souvenirs in the form of silver telescopic drinking cups. Lotta Faust, who plays *Tryxie*, will return to the cast to-morrow night, after a short vacation.

Saturday night's performance will be a gala occasion. Sir Thomas Lipton is going to attend the show along with 200 members of the Larchmont Yacht Club. Stage Manager Mitchell has devised a new patriotic finale for the second act for this occasion, entitled, "Flag of My Native Land."

At the Paradise Garden roof for the ensuing week several minor changes will be made in the bill. Aga, the floating woman, still continues to amaze large audiences. Victor's Royal Venetian Band has made a hit with its fifteen minute spirited rendition of popular music.

"Punch, Judy & Co.," in its second edition, goes on merrily with its large chorus of pretty girls. Oscar Hammerstein's latest song, "Maggie O'Donohue," is worth hearing. Josephine Sabel and twelve girls made up as hodcarriers sing it.

The burlesque on the coming yacht race called "Lifting the Cup" is the latest addition to the bill at the Crystal Garden, on top of the New York Theatre. The best song in the skit is entitled "Will Lipton Lift That Cup?" It has a rollicking chorus, and six girls armed with shillelahs help Junie McCree to sing it.

Other features of the bill that are continued are the English pony ballet, "The Darling of the Gallery Gods," and Ned Wayburn's Minstrel Misses. The young women who make up as minstrels in plain view of the audience continue to be the most popular of attractions.

Electric fans and ice-cooling plants are not needed on the floating roof garden. The steamer Grand Republic makes three landings every night except Friday. The vaudeville performance is given on the top deck and the bill this week is unusually good. Among those who will appear are Ed and Josie Evans, Olla Hood, Gardener West and Billy Barlow, and Florence Courtney and Mamie Dunn. These performers also appear on every afternoon trip the steamer General Slocum makes to Rockaway.

The Duss concerts in Madison Square Garden are well attended. This is the eleventh week, and the concerts will be continued until September. A system of exchange checks has been arranged between the concerts in the Garden and the roof garden show on top of the building. "Japan by Night" is the name of the roof garden and the comic opera "Otoyo" is sung there. When it rains the performance takes place in the concert hall.

St. Nicholas Garden reopened last night as a vaudeville house. Many changes have been made in the garden, and there were fifteen big vaudeville acts on the bill. The Great Lafayette is the headliner.

Proctor's Twenty-third Street house has a strong vaudeville bill this week. The chief act is the Eretto Familly in a human bridge-building act. Jordan and Welch are two portrayers of Hebrew character who are genuinely funny. Foster and Foster present a funny sketch called "Wanted—a Pianist."

The Fifth Avenue will have the comedy "The Old Coat," in which Frederick Bond and May Vokes will assume the principal rôles. The other rôles will be taken by well-known comedians who are members of the Proctor stock company.

"Three Wives to One Husband," a comedy, is the attraction at the Fifty-eighth street house. Edna Archer Crawford and Robert Cummings head this cast. There is a good vaudeville bill besides.

Proctor's Harlem house in East 125th street will have "David Garrick." The people who attend the continuous shows have already commended this production of an old but well-liked play.

Mr. Keith's bill for the week is made up of all-star performers. John Leonard, lately of the team of Gilmore and Leonard, will make his first appearance as a monologist, and James Horne, supported by a capable company, will present the farce, "An Awful Fix." Another feature will be Nellie Beaumont, who sings coster songs.

Tony Pastor's Theatre is really the home of vaudeville, and his patrons know when they have a good show. They will be pleased this week with the bill that has been prepared. There are fifteen big acts, beginning with Edward Favor and Edith Sinclair, and ending with new vitagraph pictures.

A group representing the late Pope lying in state is a new feature at the Eden Musée. The surroundings are as realistic as it is possible to make them, and the likeness of Leo XIII. is said to be almost perfect.

There will be concerts to-night on all the roof gardens except the New York. All the Proctor houses have Sunday concerts. Duss gives a concert in the Garden.

Amusements by the Sea.

The second and last week of "A Chinese Honeymoon" begins at the Manhattan Beach Theatre to-morrow night. Although this merry musical play ran for more than a year at the Casino, it has been doing a big business at the beach. There are many clever performers in the company. Pain's fireworks are over before the performance in the theatre begins.

The "Carnival of Nations" at Luna Park, Coney Island, was so successful and well attended last week that it will be repeated this week. Aërial acts, free for the price of admission, will be going on all day Wednesday in the park. There is no more popular amusement place than Luna Park, with its numerous attractions.

Fourteen Esquimau sledge dogs have been added to Bostock's animal show at Coney Island. An African lion-hunting baboon of unusual size is another new arrival. The school of sea lions in training in the sea pool for over a month under the direction of Mr. Bostock will make their first public appearance on the stage at the Sea Beach Palace on Wednesday.

"The Johnstown Flood" is one of the standard attractions at Coney Island.

TWO NOTED SINGERS TO RETIRE.

Marie Delna, French Contralto, and Edward Lloyd, the English Tenor.

Two interesting musical personalities are about to retire permanently from public life. One of them is youthful and the other has enjoyed a career so long as to be possible only to a darling of the British public. Marie Delna, the famous French contralto, who has sung for only a few years, comparatively speaking, has married and will sing no more in public after the completion of her present contracts. Edward Lloyd, the veteran English tenor, who sang first in 1867, has also decided to make his final appearances this spring. He was to have come here to take part in the music festival at Cincinnati, but has changed his mind. Probably this decision is advantageous to the audiences there, for if Mr. Lloyd had had a shred of voice left he would have come back.

Marie Delna has been on the stage only eleven years. She was the possessor of a remarkably beautiful contralto voice of a kind rarely heard nowadays. It was a genuine contralto, and not a mezzo-soprano, and after her début at the Opéra Comique in 1892 Mlle. Delna was an immediate favorite in Paris. She remained at the Opéra Comique singing in "L'Attaque du Moulin," "Falstaff," "Carmen," "La Vivandière," in the revival of Massé's "Paul et Virginie," and above all in Gluch's "Orfeo."

It soon became plain that in spite of her beautiful voice Mlle. Delna had never learned how to sing. Her voice, prodigally poured out during the first few years of her career, showed then no signs of wear. But that came soon and critics saw that this magnificent organ would not long retain its beauty unless the method of its use was radically changed. Mlle. Delna was told that her way of singing meant an early close to her career and was begged to change her method.

Of course, she did nothing of the kind. Singers rarely do. She kept on forcing her voice just as she had in the past, making use of every vicious trick that may be learned from the French teachers of the day and was all the time wrecking the organ that might have continued for so many years a source of beauty.

Four years ago the contralto had reached that eminence which seemed to require her presence at the Opéra instead of the Opéra Comique, at which she had always sung before. So she went to the National Academy of Music, as that institution is formally called, and made no impression whatever, to the surprise of the Paris public, who thought that she would find her greatest opportunity as *Fides* in "Le Prophéte," *Dalila* in "Samson et Dalila" and *Leonora* in "La Favorita. But Mlle. Delna found herself very uncomfortable in the great frame of the Opéra and was as glad to return to the Opéra Comique as her managers were to have her leave the theatre in which she had so disappointed expectation. Since that time, she has sung at the Opéra Comique, occasionally in London and in Russia. Now she has married a Belgian and expects to live in retirement in Brussels.

Mlle. Delna is the daughter of a peasant who kept an eating house outside of Paris. She used to wait on the table, and her singing frequently attracted the attention of the guests whom she served. She finally went to the Conservatoire in Paris, studied there for three years and then made her début, to become immediately successful. Her education had been of the most meagre character.

Maurice Grau, during his days of impresarioship, never brought Mlle. Delna to this country, because her répertoire was not of a character that would have been acceptable to the American public. It did not take her long to go the way of many operatic celebrities and take on flesh. It is curious that Mlle. Delna, one of the greatest contraltos of the day, should never have been in this country, which so liberally rewards the great artists. Mlle. Delna and Mme. Schumann-Heink stood at the head of their profession.

Edward Lloyd, the English tenor, has had a career three times at long as Mlle. Delna's. He had sung before 1871, when, as the first tenor of the Gloucester festival, he was acclaimed as the successor to Sims Reeves. Mr. Lloyd, who was born in 1845, had been a chorister in Westminster Abbey until 1860. For twenty-seven years he demonstrated the loyalty of the English people to their favorites by singing regularly at all of the Leeds festivals. He came to this country first in 1888, and has since appeared here as the soloist of the Cincinnati music festival. Once or twice in the past few years Mr. Lloyd has threatened to retire, but has always been willing to change his mind.

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