SCHUMANN-HEINK AS A STAR.

DEBUT IN "LOVE'S LOTTERY" FAR SHORT OF BRILLIANT.

Grand Opera Singer Could Not Take Herself Seriously in Laundress Part and Heliotrope Gown—Book Thick; Score Musicianly; the Rest Very Pretty.

Mme. Ernestine Schumann-Heink came to this country a few years ago as a grand opera singer with no reputation and an extremely large voice. She is now a comic opera singer with a very large reputation and an echo of the old voice. Just why she deemed it advisable to abandon *Ortrud* and *Brangäne* and *Magdalena* for the lilts and fa-la-lals of operetta she alone knows.

Fabulous tales are told of the pecuniary inducements offered to her to do so, and there may be some substantial foundation for these stories. Possibly in the sweet by and by her manager will explain to himself why he did it.

Mme. Schumann-Heink made her operetta bow last night at the Broadway Theatre in a comic opera entitled "Love's Lottery." The book of this creation emanated from the teeming fancy of Stanislaus Stange, and the music was constructed by Julian Edwards. Much sympathy is due these gentlemen, for the task placed before them was not one to be undertaken with confidence or gladsome anticipations.

Mme. Schumann-Heink was always a formidable personage, even when she was carolling in her own familiar German and leaping like a vocal antelope up or down two octaves of the harmless, necessary diatonic scale. But clad in the glittering panoply of the comic opera stage, speaking a German-English dialect which not the liveliest imagination could picture as intentionally comic, and carrying with her grand opera aspirations after spot lights, sentimental ditties, passionate emotions and cadenzas unto her own glory, she became a problem of appalling character.

In his struggle to fit her with a part giving full scope to her equipment for the line of business into which she had been lured by the temptation of the press agent and the treasurer, Mr. Stange fell into a veritable slough of despond. Picture Mme. Schumann-Heink as an amiable German laundress, clad in a heliotrope velvet bodice and a traditional satin operetta skirt of lilac and white, and enacting a rôle by turns titanically kittenish and tigerishly sentimental.

This is the sort of personage Mr. Stange evolved from his meditations. Doubtless Mme. Schumann-Heink had not a little share in the composition of the character. If she did, it may be said that the admirable comic skill which she used to show at the Metropolitan Opera House in Wagner's comic opera has fled far away from her and left her wabbling dismally between what she would be and what she unfortunately is.

It was impossible to tell last night whether she was trying to impersonate a young woman in the throes of her first love and suffering from a truly German temper, or a middle aged damosel affecting to be giddily youthful and assuming tantrums for the purpose of worrying a mature army sergeant jealously in love with her.

Perhaps she did not really know. It was difficult for her to take herself seriously in the heliotrope velvet. It was impossible to take herself so in the scarlet and black "Carmen" rig of the second act. The costume reacted on Mr. Edwards's music at this point and it reeked with reminiscence of the seguidilla.

Let us add that for the sake of scenery and costumes the thickened plot of this thick operetta was laid in merry England, which for the occasion became as solemn as British gayety itself. The locale did present handsome opportunities to the painter, and excellently did he use them, especially in the view of an English baronial seat in the second act. The costumer also performed some feats, a trifle more astonishing than those of the painter, and these, too, displayed themselves chiefly in the second act.

But when all is said and done, nothing could gloss the dulness of Mr. Stange's book or infuse life into the hopeless inanimation of the puppet offered to Mme. Schumann-Heink as a part. The actress herself could certainly not do the latter. She was pitiably heavy, and her humor confined itself to a crude emphasizing of her own cumbersome attempts at English. She burlesqued her own dialect and pressed her empty gags till even the first night audience ceased to laugh at them.

Her singing was by no means what must have been expected of a grand opera celebrity thrust into the narrow realm of operetta. There, according to popular idea, she ought to have towered far skyward above her associates. The truth is, however, that Mme. Schumann-Heink is not the singer who dazed this town a few years ago with Sunday night feats in the brindisi from "Lucrezia Borgia."

Mr. Edwards, be it known, discharged his part of the contract with care and musicianly skill. He is a composer to whose music one may listen with respect if not always with vigorous admiration. He is an artist in construction and orchestration. His melodies have fluency, contour and some character, and he well knows how to produce the tints of early English song so as to give the needed local flavor to a score accompanying an action laid in his Majesty's kingdom.

But it must be said that, except in one or two spots, the score of "Love's Lottery" lacks piquancy, sparkle and incisiveness. One song, "Follow Your Country's Flag," delighted the audience by its snap and vim. If there had been more such music it would have been better for the work.

Louise Gunning, soprano, was the chief of Mme. Schumann-Heink's assistants. She sang her music tolerably and acted intolerably. Four young women who were intrusted with small rôles, Margaret Crawford, E. Tekla Farm, Ivy Clyde and Lucia Nola—it sounds like a Swedish ladies' quartet—sang very well. Indeed, the chorus was one of the best singing assemblies brought together since the days of the boasted Castle Square chorus.

It is a pity that some of the principals did not sing as well. However, "Love's Lottery" may serve its time as a vehicle for the exposition of Mme. Schumann-Heink's singular ambition to narrow the range of her artistic usefulness. Meanwhile the world will wag onward to other shows in which the cakewalk, the coon song and the variety specialist will afford it easier amusement. It is all a great pity, for this seems to have been a lovely opportunity entirely missed.

"AFTER MIDNIGHT" SCENES.

All Laid in New York—Melodrama Starts Well in Harlem Theatre.

"After Midnight," a sensational melodrama with plenty of excitement in it and creditable scenic display, began last night a week's engagement before a large audience at the New Star Theatre, at 107th street and Lexington avenue. Lawrence Marsten and Finley Fauley are the authors and have furnished a play which should make a success on the road. All the scenes are laid in New York. They include the Grand Central Station, the interior of a "mansion" on Fifth avenue, a school for crooks in the slums, the housetops along the East River, and the interior of a Tenderloin resort.

Spencer and Aborn have staged the melodrama, and the players are a little better than the average in such productions.

Private View of Weber Music Hall.

Weber Music Hall will be thrown open to inspection to-night, when Messrs. Weber & Ziegfeld will receive their friends and point out the many changes and improvements made in the cosy little playhouse. During the evening some of the seats and boxes for the opening performance of "Higgledy-Piggledy" on Oct. 13 will be sold at regular box office rates by a system for which a prize of $500 for the best suggestion has been offered by Weber & Ziegfeld.

LIVE TOPICS ABOUT TOWN.

The last of the old cobblestones used by the city years ago for pavement purposes are being taken up from a short block on Montgomery street, between Water and South streets, and new granite stones are being put in their place. It was the last street in the city with such pavement.

"Seventy years ago," remarked an old paver, "when the city began to lay these stones, any one who said he was a paver could get a job at $4 a day laying them. There was no real paving to be done. You just threw them in, with a little sand around. It was easy money at that time. But, my, how things have changed since then!"

The bridegroom of a newly married pair journeying to the city by train, one day recently, was a railroad man. Congratulations were whistled to him from every locomotive passed in the fifty mile run. Those on the sidings made the most din, but the engineers on the trains in motion were also posted, and whistled as they sped by.

One of the party who gave the newly wedded pair a send off by pouring rice over them told the other passengers in the car what to expect. Every one seemed to enjoy the tootings from the locomotives more than the blushing bride and groom.

This is a trying time for organists and choirmasters in city churches. New singers for the autumn are usually engaged on May 1. They have all summer to change their minds in. Notwithstanding the tradition, it is not the women who most often fail to carry out their promises.

"Tenors are the worst of our trials," said the organist of an uptown church. "There are so few good ones they know they can always get a place. I never knew one of them that didn't have a queer streak in him."

There is, on Eighth avenue, in the Thirties, a photographer who has a lucrative specialty. He is the photographer of dead children. There is a tiny showcase on the street, tucked away behind the signs of a laundry and a real estate office. In this are displayed portraits of wax doll-like figures with impossibly frizzed hair, reclining on lounges, sitting in chairs, or gazing blindly out of window frames.

Mlle. Etta de Montjau, who is coming here to sing next week, is the daughter-in-law of Mme. Fursch-Madi, the dramatic soprano, who was for many years connected with musical affairs in this city, and who died, after a period of ill fortune, in a New Jersey town. Mlle. de Montjau has been a successful singer abroad for several years. Besides Mlle. Montjau's husband, Mme. Fursch-Madi left a daughter who has not followed her mother's career.

The latest campaign novelty is a photo button, with the picture of Roosevelt or Parker on it, which at night can be illuminated by electricity. The button is the same as the ordinary election button, but there is an electric attachment, which is carried in the pocket.

A late arrival from the Far West was expressing himself with vigor.

"Blank this blank Eastern butcher paper they call money!" he said. "Here I am $3 shy on this roll. Where did it go? Oh, just dropped it. I've been here three months, and I've lost $36 in ones and twos. The gold and silver I've always carried has some weight in my pocket. I know it's there. But this stuff gets mixed up with the cigarette papers and loose change in my pockets, and the first thing I know it isn't there. The other night I stood at an elevated station rolling up a wad of the blamed stuff, and a puff of wind caught a two-dollar bill. It dropped down to the street, and I peeked down and saw a newsboy grab it and make a getaway."

A New Yorker who heard his remarks replied:

"I've been West. I tried to get bills, but there was nothing doing. I wore out two trousers pockets carrying silver cartwheels, and dropped about $3 in loose change through the hole. I hadn't been in Denver a day before I gave a five-dollar gold piece to a street car conductor, thinking it was a nickel. Maybe he thought so, too, for he didn't say anything. In Frisco I gave away a tenner for a quarter, and so on. Put me down for civilized money!"

"I hear Roosevelt got a letter from the Black Hand," said a guard on the newspaper train that leaves Park place elevated station at 2:06 A. M. to a newspaper man.

"Indeed?" replied the newspaper man. "I hadn't heard of it."

"It was a note from Booker T. Washington, I believe," replied the guard, without changing a muscle of his face.

The close of the summer season takes away a source of considerable revenue from a large number of small shop keepers and pushcart pedlers who sell ice cream sandwiches.

A woman who was new to the business opened a candy store in Columbus avenue last spring. Her receipts were so small that she had about decided to sell out, when the warm weather came and she added the ice cream sandwich to her stock in trade. When she stopped making them a few days ago she figured that she had averaged selling 1,200 a day, which made an income of $12. The cream cost her a little over $4 and the biscuits a little over $1, so that her net income was at least $6 daily.

During the season she has cleared nearly $500 on these sandwiches alone, and is now bewailing the approach of winter.

Some person pasted a neat placard outside the receiving teller's window of the Mutual Bank, Broadway and Thirty-third street, yesterday afternoon. The placard read:

"Repent ere it's too late."

"Huh," said a prosperous looking depositor, "that sign ought to be at the paying teller's window."

DOCKSTADER ON BROADWAY.

Minstrel Troupe Doing Its Annual City Turn at the Herald Square—Novel Features.

Lew Dockstader's minstrel show, the most ambitious entertainment remaining in its class, began its annual Broadway engagement last evening at the Herald Square Theatre. The old fashioned minstrel first part is retained and the usual farcical skit, dancing scenes and the like are introduced to fill out the evening.

Mr. Dockstader sings a good song, "There's a Dark Man Coming with a Bundle," rides in an airship, talks politics and in the final tableau introduces figures of Roosevelt, Fairbanks, Parker and Davis. Perhaps there is a little too much politics, but there are several good singers and dancers in the troupe and all lovers of nigger minstrelsy will find something in the entertainment to enjoy.

News of Plays and Players.

"The Three Kings of Korea," a new comic opera by J. Cheever Goodwin and Emile Bruguière, is soon to be put in rehearsal by the managers who are to produce "The Baroness Fiddlesticks."

There will be another baseball match this afternoon between the nines of the Rogers Brothers and the "Checkers" companies. In the last game the former won. The game will be called at 2 o'clock at 177th street and Third avenue.

The principals of the Klaw & Erlanger company, who are to appear in the spectacle "Humpty Dumpty," began rehearsals yesterday. The chorus and ballet of nearly 400 people have been rehearsing some time. Some of the principals are: George Schiller, Frank Moulan, William E. Schrode, Frank Rice, George Prevost, J. H. Powers, Edna Aug, Nora Sarony, Nellie Daly, Maud Berri and David Abraham.

At the invitation of Sam Shubert, the thirty-six actors and actresses comprising M. Gazelles' French comedy company, will witness this evening's performance of the military play "Taps" at the Lyric Theatre. The visitors are rehearsing every day at the American Theatre prior to opening at that house next Monday night.

John M. Ratliff, the tenor of "The Yankee Consul," was married on Sunday to Miss Lucille Eagan, who played last season in "Erminie." Miss Eagan is called the Stanlaws girl. The marriage took place at the home of the bride in Mount Vernon.

PUBLICATIONS.

"The characters in David Graham Phillips' novel, **'The Cost,'** are genuinely, thoroughly, refreshingly American, people whom you feel it would be a pleasure to know—honest, prosperous, wholesouled."—*Collier's Weekly.*

"'The Cost,' David Graham Phillips' new book, combines more qualities that **will capture** the popular fancy than any recent novel."—*Louisville Courier-Journal.*

CAN'T ADOPT YOUNG ROWAN.

The Rev. Dryden Phelps Learns That the Young Man Is Twenty-one.

NEW HAVEN, Oct. 3.—The application made a week ago by the Rev. Dryden Phelps, a wealthy retired clergyman, for the adoption of William S. Rowan, who was formerly a poor boy and who recently inherited a fortune, was withdrawn to-day. Mr. Phelps found that Rowan was not a minor, being 21 years old, and he cannot adopt him.

Mr. Phelps said that he was alone in the world and wanted a companion to whom he could leave his property. He has known Rowan for years. Things have been coming Rowan's way lately. After the death of a rich uncle, who left him a fortune, he attracted attention in an automobile accident in the centre of the city, in which he was injured and his $3,000 machine smashed.

Whether the Rev. Mr. Phelps will insist on disposing of his property to Rowan he would not say to-day. It is said that his relatives may object. Prof. William Lyon Phelps of Yale is his brother.

YORKVILLE'S NEW THEATRE.

Opened by Miss Crosman, With "Sweet Kitty Bellairs"—Audience Large.

The new Yorkville Theatre, at Eighty-sixth street and Lexington avenue, opened last night with, Henrietta Crosman in "Sweet Kitty Bellairs." A large and cordial audience filled the house.

The theatre is pretty and well constructed. The decorations are in delicate shades of ivory, with touches of antique gold. The chief decorative features are the three large panels of the sounding board. The centre one is a reproduction of Sir Joshua Reynolds's picture of Mrs. Siddons as "The Tragic Muse." The carpets and draperies are of royal red and are trimmed with white and gold. White marble staircases lead, on either side, to the two balconies. The capacity of the house is nearly 1,500.

Miss Crosman's performance was graceful. She was rewarded with enthusiastic applause. Manager Bimberg responded to a curtain call, and made a brief speech. Miss Crosman also was obliged to say a few words, in which she wished the theatre a long and successful life. Manager Bimberg announced that, beginning with next week, a series of high class vaudeville bills would be presented.

Nordica's Kundry Debut.

Heinrich Conried decided yesterday to have Mme. Nordica make her first appearance in the rôle of *Kundry* at the first production of "Parsifal," to be given at the Metropolitan Opera House on Thanksgiving Day.

Driver Crushed to Death.

Frank Diamond of 512 West Twenty-first street was driving a team attached to a wagon on which was piled a lot of wooden beams to be used in the Bronx subway yesterday afternoon at Southern Boulevard and Freeman street when the load collapsed and fell on the backs of the team, carrying the driver with it. The horses dashed down the street. It was found that Diamond had been terribly crushed. He was dead when an ambulance surgeon arrived.

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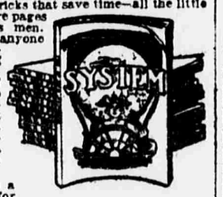

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