

JEAN ELIOT'S WEEKLY CHRONICLE OF CAPITAL SOCIETY

Newsy Gossip Of Doings in Social World

(Continued from Page 20.)

problem of "official" calling, binding official society together and proving a veritable godsend to the woman from a small town, who comes to Washington when her husband comes to Congress, ignorant of the social game and knowing no one to give her pointers. At the club she runs into women who have been through the same phase themselves; she soon learns the ropes; she forms lasting and congenial friendships and, if she is worth knowing in herself—and most of them are—she soon finds her niche in the scheme of things.

The club will give its annual New Year reception this year and after January 1 will have an informal reception every Friday afternoon, as has been its custom for several years, and there will be a dance on Tuesday evenings every week—or is it every fortnight? And later on, of course, there'll give a series of brilliant receptions—one for the Vice President, one for the Speaker of the House, probably one for the Diplomatic Corps, and possibly others. Presumably it will be the "Vice President and Mrs. Marshall" and the "Speaker of the House and Mrs. Gillett," for it's not likely they will wait until after the inauguration to do their entertaining.

PRODUCTION OF "AIDA"
HIGHLY CREDITABLE.

The success of the Washington Opera Company's production of "Aida," socially, musically, artistically,

and, it is to be hoped, financially, is to my mind the most important thing not only for the opera company but for Washington.

One came away from the opening performance on Monday evening with a delightful feeling that after all dreams do come true—sometimes! For the Washington Opera Company, after three years of the pluckiest sort of fight, under the direction of Edouard Albion, in face of almost insurmountable odds, seemed to have arrived. It took nerve to put on an opera like "Aida"—a combination of pageant and opera, which requires a mammoth production as well as a large and competent company—and it is a genuine satisfaction to those of us who know how hard the Albions—both Mr. and Mrs. Albion have given themselves unceasingly and unsparringly—have worked, to know that they had put it over in brilliant style, and to see how wholeheartedly every member of the company, from Mme. Mary Cavan who sang the Aida thrillingly, and acted it with great dramatic effect, down through Otakar Marak late of the royal opera at Prague, who add a splendid Rhadames to the least of the chorus, co-operated. It was wonderful team work, on the part of every one connected with the production. It left one seeing rosy visions of "national opera," as it is known to every country in Europe—an accomplished fact, backed by Uncle Sam, if necessary, not merely giving the public the music to which it is entitled, but giving young American musicians, singers and composers the training, and the hearing at home which in the past they have been forced to seek abroad.

Marcus Kellerman came up from Richmond to sing the Amonasro, and was equally dominating vocally and pictorially. Charles Trowbridge Titman—Washington lawyer whom his legal friends grudge to music, and his

musical friends know to be wanted in the law—brought his wonderful voice to a dignified and eminently satisfying rendition of the high priest's part; and, in a way most significant of all perhaps, Ruth Townsend—otherwise Mrs. Franklin Townsend—made her operatic debut in the part of Aida, and acquitted herself with such credit that she had every right to be as proud of herself as well as her husband is of her, to say nothing of his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Townsend. The whole family is really Philadelphia, but since Lawrence Townsend was U. S. Minister to Belgium and then to Spain, he has taken up his residence in Washington, and gone into business here, and during the war his two nephews, Franklin and Ethingham Townsend, established themselves and their families here. All Washington knows them and society generally was greatly interested in hearing Mrs. Townsend sing a leading role in a real production—and I'm told that several of her Philadelphia friends came down to hear her, though the only one I saw was Mr. John B. Thayer, whose husband was lost on the Lusitania.

**COMPANY OUT FRONT
ALSO IMPRESSIVE.**

Not only was the company on the stage very well worth while, but the company out front was equally so. The Washington world turned out in force for the occasion. Innumerable dinner parties wound up at the opera, quite like New York; and a good many of them seemed to know the rules perfectly—and realized that an entrance after the greater part of the audience was seated, was by so much the more effective.

So they came late. What's more—and worse—they came noisily and the clattering of seats and the chatter of feminine voices rather marred Marak's splendid renderings

of the lovely "Celeste Aida." However, this was only at first, for the music soon carried the audience beyond conversation and roused them to spontaneous enthusiasm seldom displayed by the proverbially cold Washington audience.

The first night assemblage was representative of the various "worlds" of which Washington's cosmopolitan society is made up—musical, artistic, official, resident, etc., with the diplomats quite numerously present. One missed the Juserands and the Goddoses. The fact that the treasurer of the opera company is Peter A. Drury, at whose home Mrs. Terence McSwiney, widow of the Lord Mayor of Cork, was a guest, probably had something to do with the absence of the British Ambassador and his wife. The papers would have it so and one can readily see how the connection might be an embarrassing one. But Mrs. John Joyce Broderick, who is of the commercial counselor of the embassy, was present, a guest in the "management" box, where Mrs. Albion and George Jakey Totten, Jr., entertained a company of distinguished guests.

The French Ambassador and Mme. Juserand reserved their support for later in the week when a French company was putting on opera comique—also under the auspices of the Washington Opera Company, but it understood. But even on the opening night the French embassy was numerously represented by members of the staff, from the counselor, Prince de Berne, down.

This French company is an offshoot of the Cercle d'Art Francais, an organization of which Otto Kahn, of New York, is the "angel," and which has for its avowed purpose the drawing closer of Franco-American ties through the medium of an interchange of art, musical and dramatic, as well as graphic and plastic. The company, giving such charming operettas as "La Mascotte" and "Jose-

phiné," alternated with our own opera company. The performance was good and yet I believe our own home taken up on better opera. Certainly it drew better support.

STARS AT MUSICAL AT FRENCH EMBASSY.

Some of the principals of the French opera company and Mme. Grippon, who came down from New York to sing the role of "Aida," replacing Cavan on the night when Marak gave way to Bossacio, a famous Italian tenor—were the "bright" particular stars at a musical which M. and Mme. Juserand gave at the embassy on Wednesday evening. Just enough guests were invited to comfortably fill the ballroom, and afterward there was a buffet supper. While there has been quite a little entertaining for the Juserands, this is the first they have done since their return from abroad and it gave some of the friends who had not seen them their first opportunity to greet them.

MAJOR TOTTEN ENTERTAINS IN HONOR OF STARS.

After the performance on Monday night, Major George Oakley Totten entertained at his fascinating home in Sixteenth street—they say it's a stable done over and completely camouflaged into an adorable studio home for a bachelor artist and architect—and it gave some of the stars of the company and the patrons and patronesses whose interest has done so much toward making the opera movement a substantial success. The invited guests included "scrambled eggs for breakfast" and perhaps there were, for Mr. Totten, although from observation and belief it seems probable that all his guests had long since departed. For the party, delightful as it was, seemed to be breaking up long about 2:30 or 3 o'clock in the morning.

Major Totten is a perfect host. He provides music, good food and a place to dance in a delightful mise en scene—and then he lets his guests amuse themselves as they see fit. There was just enough of the Bohemian about the party on Monday night to be interesting. And one carried away in the wee sma' house a pleasantly impressionistic picture of a vaulted room, with a great mirror like a cathedral window reflecting dim blue tawny lights, dancing figures and across one end a low divan on which two or three slim girls in bright colored frocks were stretched out, lazily puffing at their cigarettes.

through the Washington Opera Company has put on very creditable opera in previous seasons, but now that they've discovered just what the company can do when given proper encouragement they are certain to respond generously to any future appeal. Major Totten has also designed a dream of an opera house to house the company in one of these days—and is full of faith that it will not prove a mere castle in Spain.

Mrs. James Carroll Frazer, who had a box party for "Aida" looked as serene as though there had not been a serious accident in her house scarcely an hour before she called into the theater. Her mother, Mrs. Eugene Van Rensselaer, is rather advanced in years and not in very good health, so she has a nurse-companion to wait upon her. The latter started across the room, carrying rather carelessly a blazing alcohol lamp, and before she knew it she was herself ablaze. In fact, they say that if Mrs. Van Rensselaer had not had more presence of mind than her attendant there would have been a serious fire. As it was the nurse was painfully if not dangerously burned before the blaze was extinguished. And it must have been rather disturbing to Mrs. Frazer's dinner party.

Mrs. Frazer had a box party next night for "The Soul of America," the film version of the pageant of American history put on last winter at the Navy League's hall. The dramatic personae are, you know, some of the most prominent men and women in Washington society, many of them representing their own ancestors. Considerable honor for the New York leaders the possibility of starting in Italy a patriotic organization along similar lines. Mme. Frieda Hempel was also a visitor here last week—she was soloist with the New York Symphony and Tetrazzini gave a recital of her own—and, with her husband, William B. Kahn, she was the guest of honor at a delightful little dinner given by Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur J. Carr.

VISITING ARTISTS SEVERALLY PETERED.

Several delightful parties have been given recently for visiting artists—singers principally. Some of the members of the French opera company were a good deal feted. Mary Cavan, the bright particular star of the "Aida" production, was a great belle at Major Totten's party, her husband, Otakar Marak looking benignly on; and last Saturday William Phelps Eno had a tea especially for them. Then there was quite a little flurry of entertaining for Mme. Tetrazzini. And at a reception given for her aboard the Mayflower one afternoon she sang for the guests—a rare honor for she never gives drawing room recitals. While she was in Washington Mme. Tetrazzini visited Memorial Continental Hall to talk over with the D. A. R. leaders the possibility of starting in Italy a patriotic organization along similar lines. Mme. Frieda Hempel was also a visitor here last week—she was soloist with the New York Symphony and Tetrazzini gave a recital of her own—and, with her husband, William B. Kahn, she was the guest of honor at a delightful little dinner given by Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur J. Carr.

Euds we have always with us at this season, and several blossomed during the week—Miss Dorothy Mondell, daughter of Congressman and Mrs. Frank W. Mondell, Miss Rose Mayo Kendrick, daughter of Senator and Mrs. John B. Kendrick, who, like Miss Mondell, is a Wyoming girl, but

Fads, Fancies And Foibles of Social Leaders

transplanted more recently; and the two Taylor girls, May and Margaret, who are no relation, but good chums. Miss May Taylor, who had her coming out on Tuesday, is the daughter of Rear Admiral and Mrs. Davis W. Taylor, and Miss Margaret Taylor, of Brig.-Gen. and Mrs. Harry Taylor. She was presented yesterday.

At the Mondells I ran into Mrs. Keyes, wife of Senator H. W. Keyes, who seemed to be a prey to a most unaccountable fit of giggles. When I asked her what the joke was it turned out that she was amused at the manners—or lack of them—of the Washington servant. The latest instance being a bored looking chauffeur whom she had passed on the steps as she came in, and who asked her, sans ceremony, would she please tell Mrs. Palmer that he had been waiting for her a considerable time. As her acquaintance with the Attorney General's wife was of the slightest, she had not delivered the message, but had taken it out in chuckling over it. One wonders how much longer that poor chauffeur had to wait—and one hopes that he was not too severe with Mrs. Palmer when she finally came out.

Mrs. Keyes, by the way, has her oldest son, Henry W. Jr., home for the holidays. He arrived yesterday, having

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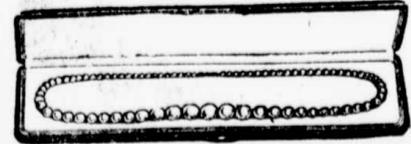
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