

Grand Opera Opens Here in Burst of Glory Initial Performance Insures Big Success for Season

THREE OF THE PRINCIPALS IN THE OPERATIC COMPANY APPEARING AT THE CORT THEATER.

'LA BOHEME' IS PRESENTED TO VAST AUDIENCE Director Bavagnoli Coaches Cast in Great Triumph in Cort Theater

By WALTER ANTHONY Grand opera came into town last night on the flood tide of Puccini's biggest music. Gaetano Bavagnoli rode on the crest, so to say, and waved a victorious baton. He would have been almost too conspicuous for complete success had not there been one G. (is it Gaetano, too) Armanini, who was the best Rudolph I have ever had the privilege of hearing. 'La Boheme' makes the hardest kind of a test on the tenor. Armanini didn't seem to mind it any more than he does the 'is' in his patronymic. His Rudolph, for those who get their thrills in grand opera from the stage and not the orchestra, was the first—and, incidentally, the last—thrill of the evening. He is a really superb artist, and with Bavagnoli, the director, proves that Italian promises are redeemed at the Cort—the very extravagant promises of the enthusiastic Ettore Patrizi, who assembled the company in Italy and introduced his compatriots last night to a cheering and cheerful audience. The company made good, and with fewer mental reservations than a pessimist would like. I mean that nobody who was in the theater that night delivered himself of this kind of a criticism: "It was a very good production of 'La Boheme,' but—" There aren't any "buts."



RITA D'ORTA

into respectful silence by sibilant occupants of high gallery seats, who wanted to get the very last cadence of Bavagnoli's orchestra. It is not with unmixed feelings that I have to inform you that 'La Boheme' will be repeated tonight. The original intention had been to produce Conchita, the new Zandonal opera tonight. Bavagnoli is the cause of the change in repertoire. Bavagnoli has a musical conscience, it seems, and is unwilling to bring Conchita to us in an unprepared and incomplete condition. The singing artists are "up" in the opera but the orchestral score, delayed in reaching this city, is of such stupendous difficulty that three rehearsals are not sufficient in Bavagnoli's estimation. More rehearsals have been ordered to the end that the score shall be given an adequate presentation befitting the premiere of the opera in America.

ON TO REPEAT LA BOHEME To that account a rearrangement of the repertoire has been made for this week as follows: "La Boheme" will be repeated tonight with the same notable cast. Periera, the coloratura-soprano of the company, will make her first appearance Tuesday night in "Lucia"; "La Boheme" is the bill for the Wednesday matinee; "Lucia" will be put on Wednesday night; Thursday night will be given over to "Traviata"; "La Boheme" will be repeated Friday night; "Lucia" will be given again at the Saturday matinee and Saturday night will disclose "Conchita."

OTHERS HAVE HONOR However, you must not think that Bavagnoli and Armanini are all there is of La Boheme as sung last night. I am merely attempting to suggest to you over your coffee this morning what happened last night during a radiant three hours of music when the Lambarini-Patrizi grand opera company took up all of its obligations and paid in full with golden notes. Mimi was sung by A. Matini. It was also acted by A. Matini. This does not always happen. The role of Mimi is a good deal like the role of Carmen. If it is well sung, it can be poorly acted and still be successful; or it if it is well acted it can be poorly sung and still be successful. For Mimi is at once a vocal and histrionic fact. Last night it was well sung and well acted. It recalled another Lambarini grand opera season—Bertozzi—though A. Matini did not sin against the pitch as the former did. Likewise she missed a little of the poignancy of the part. Her Mimi was a vivacious seatstress and her very black eyes were hard put to it to languish in suggestions of tubercular tragedy. However, she overcame a natural advantage of color, sprightliness, with much loveliness of voice and persuasively acting, both of which elements were at their best in the third act scene, ending in the remarkable quartet. She imbued with deep tenderness her melodic bit, "Addio, senza rancore," and in the episode where, hidden behind the tree, she overhears Rudolph's colloquy with Marcel, she was as tenderly pathetic a little figure as ever wore the simple gown of the seamstress heroine of Puccini's masterpiece.

Orpheum Offers Huge Bill Full of Good Things

NIGHT OF SURPRISES The night was a series of cumulative interest. Beginning with the sentimental melody for the tenor in the first act, where Rudolph begins "Che gelida manina," and soars upward to the high C through the sextet at the end of the second act and the quartet at the close of the third, the night was a succession of surprises, in which the individual success of Rita D'Orta, who was Musetta, Nicoletti, who was Mimì, and Patrizi who was Colline the philosopher with the coat, and Martini, of course, who was Mimi, were merged in an ensemble of singing and acting, the whole conspiring to give us the best "La Boheme" we have heard since Grau gave us Fritz Scheff in the role of Musetta.

CHANGE IN REPERTOIRE The success of the opera season became an assurance and everybody seemed to be well pleased. Patrizi wore as modestly as he could the proud air of one who can say, "I told you so," and only Lambarini remained out of sight. SMART FOLK IN AUDIENCE It was a fashionable audience too. Many were determined to make it a regular "grand opera" occasion by wearing their grand opera cloaks and their best grand opera manners. This, however, was not to be. I mean that the production wasn't interrupted by chatter in the boxes nor elsewhere. Trust the gallery to attend to that. Impulsive persons, indeed, who wanted to applaud and act so in the wrong place, were immediately hissed.



Stars who may be seen in the various vaudeville houses.

James Reynolds in "I'm the Guy" and a number of other songs and a bright monologue was another popular feature of the bill.

CLASSIC REVIVAL AT THE ALCAZAR For the first time in about 15 years Oscar Wilde's most popular play "Lady Windermere's Fan" will be presented in San Francisco this evening, at the Alcazar, with Sarah Truax, Thurlow Bergen, the complete stock company and a number of specially engaged people in the east. A sumptuous pictorial production is promised. Few modern roles afford more opportunity for varied emotional display than that of Mrs. Erylne, in which Miss Truax will be seen. Its phases range from lightest frivolity to profound maternal soltitude, and only an actress possessed of rare versatility could competently fulfill all its requirements. Bergen is sure to be more than acceptable as Lord Darlington.

EMPERESS TAKES YOU SLUMMING Sitting in an easy opera chair at the Empress this week one may take a personally conducted strolling tour of the Barbary Coast and Chinatown. The principal feature of such a trip are reproduced on a lavish scale and with remarkable fidelity to conditions there. The grim gaiety of the dance halls, the dim opium joints formerly open to the tourists, and a typical street scene are depicted. In the spectacular dance hall scene even the somber touch of those who have slipped over the brink into the drug den class is depicted. A striking incident is the visit of the Salvation Army and the plaintive strains of "O, Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" sung by those visitors. In the dance hall scene Penner and Toleman, two of the daintiest and cleverest exponents of the Texas Tommy, go through the makés of that dance. This extra feature caps a bill which was well received throughout. Bud and Nellie Hein, juveniles, present a clever bit of nonsense, the Ladella Comiques with humorous acrobatics were a scream. J. Albert Hall and company, in a farcical and elaborately produced burlesque on Hamlet, were hits yesterday. Kretore has an unusually clever repertoire of impersonations and a collection of novelty musical instruments.

FIGHT ROMANCE AT PANTAGES It is high water mark at the Pantages this week, and the water's in. Whether you like music, comedy, acrobatics or the tabloid drama, you can find some of the cleverest entertainers seen here for weeks. A love story intertwined with the incidents of the world of sport is well presented in "The Star Bout," which portrays the victory of one Joe Brady, the Goslin, in the battle for the featherweight championship and his discovery of who his best friend was. A complete story is compressed into three scenes, of which the last is a fully staged prize fight. Brady is well acted by Harry Sullivan. Maxine Farrell, who abandons him when he refuses to throw the match in his own favor, is strikingly enacted by Kate Leach. Nelson Deane as the champion and Lloyd Sabine as the referee are realistic figures. Cyclone Kelly and Young Britt appear in the preliminary to the main bout. The Lillian sisters, playing the violin and piano, appear in a pleasing musical number in which classical and popular music are mingled. Their rendition of the sextet from "Lucia" was one of the hits of the afternoon. "The Finish" is another sketch above the average of vaudeville programs. It introduces Florence Lorraine, an actress of remarkable versatility. The plot abounds with thrilling and clever farcical situations. The Capital City Four have some new tricks in comedy, while the Apollo Trio live up to their title in some difficult gymnastics. Provo, a wistling ventriloquist, has a new variation of ventriloquism and mimicry which is effective. The recent Ladies' Kennel club dog show made a hit in the moving pictures.

PICTURE FRAMING THAT ENDURES Choosing a picture frame is a matter of much concern. It can't be changed with the seasons. It associates itself with the picture for a lifetime and should be possessed of character that will endure as well as the features that are transitory. Styles change, but there are elements of a permanent nature that enter into proper picture framing. Our expert salespeople and skilled workmen can advise considerably in this regard, backed by a stock of picture frame mouldings not surpassed in elegance and variety on the coast. School Drawing Supplies—Meeting all the requirements of colleges, convents and public schools. Legal Blanks, Stationery, Office Supplies, Blankbooks, Journals, Ledgers, Scrapbooks, Filing Devices. Artists and Architects' Supplies—Imported and domestic of all standard makes. Games and Table Games, Playing Cards, Checkers, etc. Fountain Pens—The Marshall, best at \$1; Royal at \$1.50; self-ink; Argosium, plain and gold or silver mounted. We repair all makes. Leather Handbags—Leather and utilitarian Suitcases and Traveling Bags; Trunks. Holiday Goods now on display in wholesale department. Inspection by country trade invited. SANBORN, VAIL & CO. Wholesale and Retail, 725-729 Mission St., bet. 24 and 25th.

LAUGHTER WAVE ON 'OFFICER 666' OVER 'OFFICER 666' SURELY PLEASING

New York started laughing over the melodramatic farce, "Officer 666," something like a year ago. Chicago followed suit, and the laughing wave in the windy city kept up for more than seven months. At present San Francisco is holding its sides over the ludicrous situations of Augustin McHugh's farce as presented at the Columbia theater. One-half of the engagement closed with a large audience in attendance last night, and the advance sale of seats for the second and final week of the engagement, beginning with tonight, is the biggest in the history of farce at the Columbia theater. The final performance will be given next Sunday night. There will be matinee Wednesday and Saturday. Maelyn Arbuckle in Klaw & Erlanger's production of "Edmund Day's" drama of the west, "The Round Up," will be presented at the Columbia theater, commencing next Monday night. The advance sale of seats opens Thursday.

"A Peck o' Pickles," Frank Stammers' musical comedy, entered on the fourth week of a record breaking engagement at the Savoy theater yesterday with audiences that taxed the capacity of the McAllister street playhouse. Kolb and Dill have given many excellent shows in the dozen years that they have made San Francisco laugh, but never such a satisfactory entertainment. During the four scenes of the two-acts the Gorman comedians are almost continually in the limelight and the fun is seldom allowed to wane. There are many musical interruptions, some serious and all worth hearing, besides pretty and novel dances. The Scotch march by a score of girls in kilts is the best thing of the kind seen here in many a day, while Maude Lillian Berri, Olga Stock, Bessie Franklin, Percy Bronson, Otto Schrader and the rest of the principals are diverting in many ways. From present indications "A Peck o' Pickles" will continue to enjoy a prosperous run for several weeks.

Goldberg, Bowen & Co. SPECIAL: MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY COFFEE, TEA, BRAZIL NUTS, DATES, CARR & CO'S CRACKERS, TUNNY FISH, BAKING POWDER, EDUCATOR BUTTER WAFERS, SAND SOAP, COCOA, VAN HOUTEN, EL RIO ASPARAGUS, ALMONDS, GLOSS STARCH, ALUMINUM WARE, WHITE COGNAC.

KNORR'S FAMOUS PEA SOUP ROLLS For making excellent nourishing soup; equal to home made; Pea, Bean and Lentil varieties. 1/4s, 10c; 1/2s, 15c; 1s, 30c. CIGARS "Tasso Brand" Favorite Cigars, box of 50, reg. \$5.50. box \$5.25. GINGER ALE, CALIFORNIA PORT WINE, COCHRAN & CO'S BOURBON WHISKEY, PLAIN SAUTERNE, E. & O. COCKTAILS, MATTION WATER, V. V. CLARET, BUSHMILL'S IRISH WHISKEY, GOLDEN REISLING, D. C. L. SCOTCH WHISKEY, DOLIN'S COGNAC AND CINZANO.

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