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CHARLOTTE, N. C.

## MUSICAL MELANGE

BY KARL VON LAURENZ.

In reviewing the musical events of last week I find there two student concerts of the Elizabeth and Presbyterian colleges, respectively, and one performance of a musical comedy at the Academy of Music. It goes without saying that the latter did not vary grossly from the rules and particularities of its species, though one might remark that the casts of the musical plays which have visited Charlotte of late, indicate a pronounced change in the tactics of the managements. Hitherto it has been the habit of the big concerns, who put out musical attractions, to engage leading women, juvenile women and actresses which had but little voice and whose ample curves and to make up for this deficiency, but in "Coming Through the Rye" and "Forty-Five Minutes From Broadway," the co-star and star respectively, were possessed of a real voice. As to the value and beauty of the music that one finds thrown into these farcical comedies there is, of course, little to say. George Cohan's manner is well-known and if one has heard one of his tunes, one knows them all, for the Yankee Doodle comedian is not particularly blessed with originality, and inspiration is always tight with him. While a potpourri of national airs, dress in with occasional runs "a la Piccolo" and you have the combination that opens the door to his workshop. Still even he, at times, has an idea, which, though it may be frivolous, has nevertheless its charms and attractiveness—vide: "Mary in a Grave," "Old Names" and since the writer is wholly unpretentious, does not condescend to give us no riddles to solve, we might forgive him.

At the more serious musical events, the two student concerts, one is truly justified in rejoicing. In the performance of these young ladies one frequently detects considerable talent, even genius, and it is further very encouraging to see what great an interest the public in general takes in these recitals. With regard to the programme, one can but but compliment these in authority on their good judgment, for most of the performers were allowed to go beyond their possibilities. This is truly remarkable, for the contrary is the case in most modern female colleges. Sometimes it has become a rule with these latter that on the programme of a graduating or ordinary student recital must be at least one Beethoven, one Brahms and one Bach number—or there are classical, you know, and classicism is commendable. The establishment of this feature is mainly due to the fact that the honorable and very learned presidents of the colleges do not have the arrangements and management of musical matters entirely in the hands of the musical directors, but mix in and make suggestions and experiments on this to their foreign herd. Naturally their word is command and as the consequence we see a little 17-year-old girl struggle with the "Appassionata," the "Fugue" or possibly "The Atonal." Such experiments have always seemed ghastly to me, for

we even grant that the girl may overcome the technical difficulties of these compositions, she will never at that age arrive at a satisfactory solution of their meaning. It seems like a sacrilege; the great Beethoven, the man who had tasted of all the bitterness and sweetness of life alike, who had known the profound depths of sorrow and had lived on the very heights of joy and ecstasy, interpreted by a guileless little girl, whose life has been one even stream of comfort and whose greatest disappointment has been the discovery that Sarah J.'s last dress was prettier and more fashionable than hers. It is just like a poet trying to describe in verses, sensations which he has never experienced, passions which he has never felt or like a painter, who has never been out of the United States, trying to paint an Oriental landscape; imagination had to make up for lack of knowledge and understanding. True, the imagination of a college girl is generally quite rich, in many cases abnormal, but it has nothing in common with Beethoven's; to interpret his thoughts one must have lived and suffered. "He, who never in tears ate his daily bread, who never lay weeping on his couch during the long, sorrowful nights, he knows ye not, ye earthly powers. Ye drag us into life, ye make the mortals become sinners, then ye leave them in utter dejection and despair, for every guilt must be avenged on earth." And how could one expect a sweet innocent and immature college girl to have experienced the merciless whip-lash of the mystic earthly powers? Let her wait until the hour arrives and in the meantime let her try her art on some of the other compositions which are less difficult, more graceful and not quite so deep. There is plenty of chance for a display of technique and cantilena in the airs and scenes of Mme. Chamade, in the pieces of the genial Mozowski, the fantasias and rhapsodies of the gigantic Liszt or the somber reveries of the almighty Tchaikovsky and consorts. The truth of the gentle reminder: "Do not go beyond your ability, and you will be successful" will then be clearly demonstrated. In these two student concerts such was the case, which was indubitably one of the causes that made them so enjoyable, and I can but express again my sincere regard and respect for the excellent judgment and ability of those in command of the music department of the colleges.

For this week are announced two musical events of importance, the performance of the much discussed opera, "Madam Butterfly," at the Academy of Music on the 14th and the recital of the New York soprano, May Penfield, in the banquet hall of the Biltmore Hotel on the 27th. Miss Penfield has an excellent reputation in New York as a lyrical soprano with a very sweet and flexible voice of great range, some critics of the metropolis comparing it in their estimate to that of Clara Louise Kellogg, and her appearance here in concert is

ancholy reveries of the gypsies at the "Boulevard," as the orchestra of "Sherry's" is different from the glittering band at "Sulzer's" Harlem casino. But throughout this world of food and pleasure the music has the same unflinching characteristic of genial and ingratiating appeal: it is as frankly panderous to the appetite of the ears as the sauces and entrees of the restaurant to the palate.

The music of the cafe is not the less interesting because it is so entirely unpretentious. It is merely an accompaniment to eating or a covering for conversation or, towards the hours of dawn and sunrise, a provocation to the beautiful and tragic voluptuosity of these establishments to compare these music-halls and the sophisticated popular music which they play and which is so particularly their own with any classic orchestral bodies or classic masters, for seen from such a standpoint of view the cafe music must needs appear base and trivial. I wish merely to dwell for a few moments on the merits small though they be, of this music. The spirit of it lives in snatches and echoes that return long afterwards and haunt you in other places and amid other scenes like the vague scent of perfume and garden concerts, may suddenly spring into vitality and propriety when you hear them amid their own surroundings of light and wine, beauty and extravagance, light-hearted gaiety and, tragic unhappiness. Their home is in that world of cafe and restaurant life which is strictly of no nationality at all and which belongs rather to a stage of civilization than to any race of people. Whether in France, Germany, Italy or America, this luxurious and artificial life has its attractions for those who have the necessary amount of money, the necessary degree of social education and the necessary temperament to avail themselves of the pleasures it offers. Its language is the rustic of banquets—spoken in which are universally recognized and treated with the highest respect—and in it, perhaps more than in any other phase of life, the barriers of nationality are completely thrown down. But though it has no nationality, it has a central home, which is the French capital. Here in the United States we find a city which is in many respects quite an able imitation of Paris—the City of New York. There in that metropolis of civilized America, that life-center of the United States and those headquarters of all the luxury and all the pleasures that can be bought, this kind of music is found at its best. It has a thousand subtle shades of difference, according to the place in which one hears it, and the enlightening melodies that float down nightly from the balcony of the Cafe Martin are as different from the mel-

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## NATURAL HISTORY.

Washington Star.  
Come hither, Rebo. Bring thy beak.  
And open it before me, thus.  
Upon the creature we will look  
Which nature writers oft discuss.  
The gentle Donkey now doth make  
A hit; he is endeared to fame  
By all the lickings he can take.  
And keep on licking just the same.  
The Elephant we hail with glee,  
Though thick of skin, since years ago  
He somehow has contrived to be  
A fitting feature of the show.  
And prohibitionists so stout  
Should have the casual don't you think,  
Who trudges valiantly about  
For days and never takes a drink?  
O'er all of these we lightly pass.  
They mean full well, but what's the use?  
When Bulls and Bears stamped, also,  
The whole menagerie cuts loose!

## HANDS.

Baltimore Sun.  
The hands of the happy are shak-  
And the hands of the weary are tight.  
The hands of the masters are bound  
With bundles of money and might.  
The hands of the laborer are bare,  
With tan of the tolling year.  
With bare and there in the night a mark  
Of the constant dropping of tears.  
Oh, hands can be strong and fair,  
And hands can be weak and thin.  
But two little hands of a child in prayer  
Asking God's grace from sin.  
Two little hands like these  
For ever a little child on its knees  
Is the lord of an angel's wings.

## FOR THE OBSERVER.

LES MENAGERES.  
He who in the depths of one  
Reaches up a hand to pluck a flower in  
He is  
That once again have we seen glow  
About him in the bright day  
And then that hand directly from above  
By some unseen, the world did glow.  
And again in spirit and there, up  
In utterance in the shadows of the night  
Do those who have voluntary will,  
Whom the hand can be strong and thin,  
Yet—on hands and feet in the night,  
Who are unknown, would have  
The same.