

## BERLIN AROUSED BY PROPAGANDA OF MUSICAL AMERICA

[Continued from page 2]

stands the language and does not know the conditions.

"I do not want to go on record as one who defames the dear old Fatherland. I believe that the conditions in the theaters and opera houses of all Europe are far from being ideal. I do not care to discuss the question whether they are better over here, but I know that an American music teacher, whose daughter is now a prima donna in one of the small court theaters in Germany, broke up his home and went to a boarding-house, together with his younger children, because he wanted his wife to go with the daughter, who started her career at the bottom. The man, who was born and raised in Germany, and had sung in European opera houses, knew very well what he was doing, and his undertaking was successful, but the cost was very high, for himself and the younger children, who had to miss the wife and mother.

"The other day a member of our staff received a small volume—Nietzsche's 'Gedichte und Gedanke.' He was quite astonished to find in this book a sheet of paper on which was written a poem bearing the title 'Farewell to My Mother.' The donator had accidentally left this paper in the book. When I saw it I came to the conclusion that it was the writer's intention to commit suicide. One of our reporters was sent at once to this man. He found him in despair, he was lonesome, oh so lonesome! His money was gone; he hadn't eaten anything except a couple of rolls for many days and he had had such a dreadful and sad Christmas! His family is sending this young German student a monthly allowance till he will be able to make a living, but the allowance did not arrive in time. In the house was nobody he could talk to. He does not speak English. So he became desperate. The *Abendblatt* has many readers who contribute to our private charity fund. A few dollars out of this fund and a good 'talking to' made a new man out of this would-be suicide. He felt that in the foreign country there were some people who took an interest in him.

"Now this is the story of a well-educated, strong young man who came very near throwing away his life. Let us suppose a young girl, studying music in Europe, had the same experience. Her landlady or somebody else shows her some kindly interest, but with the intention of ruining her or even of making a white-slave out of her. In Europe the women are not as much respected and as well protected as in America. Foreigners who come to Europe and do not know this therefore run a great risk.

"Let us go back to the musical situation in America. Mr. Freund's propaganda for American artists and for American art has made a sensational success. People who hear his lectures are very enthusiastic. I am not quite convinced that to-day there are enough musical geniuses in America to supply all the needs of a music-loving public, but I believe it is time to combat the prejudice which exists among the Americans against their home talent and American art.

"This young nation was too busy in building railroads, founding industries and developing the resources of this rich country to bother much with art, but now it will find time to attend to the higher wants. If it looks around it will be quite astonished to discover that American art really exists, and it will then give the American artists proper recognition.

"To call attention to the existence of American art and American artists is an undertaking which deserves credit and to that extent at least I heartily approve of the propaganda Mr. Freund is making."

### Mme. Bloomfield Zeisler Endorses the Course of "Musical America"

The renowned American pianist, Mme. Fanny Bloomfield Zeisler after her phenomenal success at her recital last Saturday afternoon, sent the editor of *MUSICAL AMERICA* the following message, through Mr. Arthur Judson:

"Tell Mr. Freund that I fully indorse the stand he is making for the proper recognition of American singers, artists, composers and teachers!

"He is doing a great and noble work

and it behooves all those who, like myself, have been 'through the mill' to stand by him in the brave fight he is making.

"It is only those who have had to struggle as I did to win success who can have any idea of the terrific effort necessary to overcome the prejudice which, even today, exists against everything and everybody in music bearing the name 'American.'"

### Say Publicity Acts as Timely Warning

Bureau of Musical America,  
3 to 30 Winterfeldstrasse,  
Berlin, December 29, 1913.

THE stand taken by John C. Freund with regard to the dangers and pitfalls surrounding American music students—pre-eminently the girl students—in Europe, has created a much greater stir in Berlin than you may be aware of. When your correspondent attended the luncheon in the Hotel Esplanade of the American Luncheon Club of Berlin on the 17th, at least half a dozen per-

sons took occasion to broach this subject to him. Opinions vary, of course, as to the justice of Mr. Freund's attitude, but there seems to be a consensus of opinion that it was a fortunate inspiration that brought up this topic at all.

"At least," said a prominent speaker of the colony, "it will tend to inform Americans at home of the dangers involved in the altered conditions of life for young women pursuing their studies abroad."

In our conversations with German newspapermen we were unable to draw forth a more significant statement than that the dangers surrounding our young women studying in Europe are common to all countries and by no means confined either to Germany, France or Italy; that these dangers are in no way the result of peculiarities of this or the other country, but are rather to be attributed to the sudden liberation of the student from previous family influence, which in many cases may have been of the strictest. Therefore, conclude the Germans, the danger in the case of a young German woman leaving her family and friends to go alone and unprotected to America would be just as great as with the American woman coming to Europe. And this is exactly what Mr. Freund himself avers.

O. P. JACOB.

## SUCCESS UNEQUIVOCAL CROWNS "L'AMORE DEI TRE RE" IN ITS FIRST AMERICAN PERFORMANCE

Coming Almost Unheralded, Montemezzi's Opera Produces Electrifying Effect Upon Witnesses of Its Premiere at Metropolitan—"One of the Most Deeply Affecting and Full-blooded Scores Since Wagner"—Thrillingly Sung by Bori, Amato, Ferrari-Fontana and Didur

"L'AMORE DEI TRE RE" ("The Love of the Three Kings"), a three-act lyrical tragedy with text by the young but well-known Italian poet and dramatist, Sem Benelli, and music by the young but practically unknown Italian composer, Italo Montemezzi, was given for the first time in this country at the Metropolitan Opera House on Friday evening, January 2, as the second operatic novelty of the season. The production was consummated with a minimum of advance heralding, without increase in the prices of accommodations and without any particular claims of the management in respect to the artistic qualities of the work. And the wisdom of this policy of comparative silence and seeming indifference was demonstrated forcibly and movingly at the premiere even as had been the case with "Boris" last season and with "Königskinder" two years earlier.

"L'Amore dei Tre Re" is in relation to

the "Rosenkavalier" a repetition of the case of "Königskinder" and the "Girl"—only with a reversal of nationality in the present instance. Gently and unostenta-



—Photo by White

"Avito" (Edoardo Ferrari-Fontana) and "Flora" (Lucrezia Bori) in the Love Scene, Act II, "L'Amore dei Tre Re"

tiously it unfolded itself a creation of the purest, most touching, simplest and most resistless beauty, a pregnant new word in the lexicon of modern Italian opera, in many ways the most gratifying example of musical drama from the higher aesthetic standpoints that has come out of Italy since Verdi.

True enough, the drama as such is very far removed from the coarse, sensuous, blood-heating affairs so highly prized by contemporary operatic artisans of that country and so dear, though vitiating, to popular taste. True, as well, Montemezzi has neither essayed nor achieved fire-eyed and revolutionary conclusions in his music for the delectation of progressive pedantry. Nor yet has he pandered, Puccini-like, to obvious musical appetites. In spite of all these im-

pediments, apparently formidable to those of superficial mentality, there need be little apprehension respecting the success of "L'Amore." Popular psychology in such matters often seems baffling to those who fail to recognize that the great body of the public is in the last analysis fully responsive to the effects of the genuinely sterling in art. Lofty beauty paired with sincerity is an element to which the popular consciousness eventually reacts despite the controversies of cynicism. And with these qualities Montemezzi's opera is suffused from the first bar to the last. Moreover it has the invaluable asset of brevity; barely two hours and a half are required for the enactment of the tragedy, including the two intermissions, thus bringing it practically within the same time limit as "Bohème."

In this brief preamble momentary reference must likewise be made to the magnificently opulent mounting provided by the Metropolitan, and the devoted efforts and superb interpretation accorded the work by Miss Bori, and Messrs. Amato, Edoardo Ferrari-Fontana and Didur, not forgetting the all-



Sem Benelli, Poet of "L'Amore dei Tre Re"—"No Such Beautiful Libretto Has Fallen to the Lot of an Italian Opera Composer in Many Years"

comprehensive influence of Mr. Toscanini at the orchestral helm.

### Success Unequivocal

Success indeed crowned the new opera absolutely and unequivocally and it may forthwith be considered to have taken its place in the Metropolitan repertoire as a popular favorite destined to rank with "Boris" and "Königskinder." The first act, to be sure, left the issue unsettled, for though the large audience applauded it cordially it was not yet prepared to pledge its faith unreservedly. But doubt and hesitancy vanished with the second act, after the thrilling conclusion of which the house broke into a tornado of applause and hypothetical success became assured triumph. Sixteen times were the four principals summoned before the curtain amidst cheers, and unavailing efforts were made to bring forward Mr. Toscanini. But the conductor, later reported to be indisposed, refrained from appearing. Practically everyone remained to witness the tragic dénouement and there was also much enthusiasm when the final curtain fell.

The production was in all its departments worthy of the little master-work. The *mise-en-scène* by Mario Sala is striking in every scene—the sombre hall with its huge blocks of marble supported by thick marble columns; the castellated battlements in the second act with massive fortress in the background and overhead, floating clouds which thicken at the approach of the catastrophe; and the chapel crypt in the third, a reproduction of the church of San Vitale in Ravenna with its architecture and mosaics of Byzantine style.

[Continued on next page]



Italo Montemezzi, Composer of "L'Amore dei Tre Re"—"Normal Advance Along the Lines of the Present Score May Prove Him the Legitimate Heir to the Supremacy of Verdi"