

ECHOES OF MUSIC ABROAD

War Works Havoc with Bayreuth Festival and Prevents Bavarian King from Paying It an Official Visit—Camille Saint-Saëns and Gustave Charpentier Bury the Hatchet—Paris Lawyer One of the Winners in This Year's "Prix de Rome" Contest—Open-Air "Siegfried" in Open-Air Theater, with an American "Forest Bird"—Concerning the Unmusical Man, His Foibles and His Uses—Hans von Bülow's Widow No Longer Connected with the German Brahms Society

WITH no definite particulars available as yet, the most likely supposition concerning the fate of this year's Bayreuth Festival is that hardly more than a week's performances were given before the country was plunged into war. In fact, the mobilization proceedings may have wrought havoc with the casts before even the first week was out. The first performances scheduled to take place were "The Flying Dutchman" on the opening day, July 22, and again on July 31, "Parsifal" on July 23 and the first "Ring" cycle on the 25th, 26th, 27th and 29th. By this time all three of the musical directors of the festival—Dr. Karl Muck, Michael Balling and Siegfried Wagner—may be experiencing active service with weapons more deadly than the baton.

It seems that early in July rumors were afloat in Berlin that as a protest against the conduct of Frau Cosima and Siegfried in permitting *Isolde's* case to be aired in the courts many of the singers had decided not to participate in the festival. Moreover, a startling percentage of the tickets had been returned by indignant purchasers. These reports brought a correspondent of the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung* to the scene in hot haste, and his story of conditions as he found them is quoted in the New York *Staats-Zeitung*.

Having perceived nothing indicative of disappointment in the manner of the hotel proprietor, he rushed up the hill to the Festspielhaus. "A rehearsal was just over. Half a dozen acquaintances from Berlin and elsewhere were quickly greeted. All looked pleased and eager. The rehearsals, then, had not yet been interrupted. 'Are all here already?' I asked, in the most casual manner of a newcomer who has never heard that all the Bayreuth Festival artists are required to be on hand by the 15th of June. 'Of course!' was the reply. 'Not one is missing; there isn't even one sick.'

"Slowly the various groups wandered down the hill to their quarters. I could identify nearly all of the celebrities on the list of this year's participants, as well as the uncelebrated who hope to gain position and prestige through Bayreuth appearances. A few were missing. But these, too, I had seen before midnight came—at the Eule, where now for the Wagner intimates there is fitted up a Siegfried-Wagner room, at the Wolf-Schlucht and the Harmonie, at Grampp's, Hans Richter's *Stammkneipe*, at the Post and in other places less rich in tradition.

"All were jubilant. There was no suggestion in their mood of sinister revolutionary intention. But the enthusiasm for Bayreuth, for the House Wahnfried and the festival performances was the same as in other years. There were, of course, many new faces; but that has been the case of late years. Some of the old Bayreuth heroes are withdrawing from stage activity; others of them demand such high fees that they are no longer possibilities for the festivals. They make way for the younger generation, which in its turn is anxious to come under the spell of the Grail magic."

As for the tickets, it was found that the "Ring" cycles were completely sold out, while seats were still available for both "Parsifal" and "Der fliegende Holländer," especially the latter. It was evidently true that some people who had subscribed for tickets last October had refused to lift them because of the malodorous trial to establish Frau Beidler's parentage. In doing so they availed themselves of their privilege of declining the tickets up to within four weeks of the festival.

In some quarters it will seem particularly unfortunate that this Summer's festival should be interrupted in view of the fact that King Ludwig III of Bavaria, with his queen and retinue, was to have attended some of the performances. It would have been the first time

that he cannot help feeling proud of a chance handclasp given him by M. Saint-Saëns, which will leave with him at least the remembrance of 'a moment of very sweet emotion,' which was shared unanimously by his confrères of the Académie."



Edyth Walker, the American Soprano, Who Recently Won a New Triumph at the Cologne Festival as "Elizabeth" in "Tannhäuser"

since 1882 that the Bavarian Court had taken official cognizance of a Bayreuth festival.

PARIS, or, rather, the artistic circles of the city, sat up and gaped at the spectacle of two supposedly irreconcilable musical enemies "making up" most abruptly and unexpectedly, when the Beaux Arts committee of the Académie was in session to decide the Prix de Rome contest. It will be recalled that Camille Saint-Saëns was one of the members of the Académie most strenuously opposed to the election of Gustave Charpentier to membership. *Le Monde Artiste* thus relates the sequel:

"M. Saint-Saëns writes—M. Saint-Saëns writes much since the death of Massenet—that on meeting M. Charpentier quite by chance in the corridors of the Institut he grasped his hand, an act that drew forth from his colleagues an ovation for him 'that produced the sweetest emotions of my life.'"

"On his side M. Charpentier states

"How touching all this is!" adds *Le Monde Artiste's* cynical observer, who has known of many other emotional outbreaks, both "sweet" and otherwise, on the part of musicians.

EVIDENTLY the open-air performances of "Siegfried" at the Zopot nature theater near Dantsic proved a most satisfactory success. The cast, which was headed by Heinrich Hensel and included an American *Forest Bird*, was well chosen, on the whole, and the music drama itself was demonstrated to be almost an ideal work for performance under such natural conditions. Then, too, the Crown Princess attended the first performance and that added special zest to the public's interest in it.

"The entire production presented an organic whole of astonishing harmoniousness," wrote a Dantsic correspondent to the *Berliner Tageblatt*. "All the factors concerned in the success of the undertaking vied with one another in their zeal to give the work the stamp of per-

fection. Professor Lütkemeyer of Cobourg had furnished the stage in the mountainous Jäschkenthaler Forest—which seemed to be made especially for "Siegfried"—with special decorations that added the touch of the heroic landscape to the idyllic character of the leafy grove, without in any way detracting from the fresh impression of living nature. At the conductor's desk Selmar Meyrowitz, from the Hamburg Municipal Opera, presided with inspiring enthusiasm and the excellent Blüthner Orchestra, of Berlin, followed him as under a spell.

"The Prelude, the 'Waldesweben' and the Magic Fire produced an unforgettable effect in the profoundly impressive atmosphere of nocturnal nature. Heinrich Hensel, of the Hamburg Municipal Opera, sang *Siegfried* with most potent art, and he had a worthy partner in Sophie Palm-Cordes, of the Stuttgart Court Theater, whose *Brünnhilde* was vocally and dramatically a noteworthy achievement. For the first time it was possible to see the *Wanderer* really approach from the distance, and Hans Spiess, from the Brunswick Court Theater, sang and acted the rôle majestically."

Ethel Hansa, the American soprano of the German Opera in Charlottenburg-Berlin, sang the *Forest Bird* "with soul," we are told, and there are compliments also for the *Mimi*, Peter Kreuder, of Hamburg; the *Alberich*, Herr Zador, of Dresden; the *Fafner*, Louis van de Sande, of Berlin, and the *Erda*, Hertha Frank, of Dantsic.

At about the same time there took place in Dantsic the second song festival of the Prussian Singsbund. The Blüthner Orchestra was drafted into service here also, and in the excerpts from "Parsifal" with which the festival closed Heinrich Hensel, Carl Braun and Werner Engel were entrusted with the solos.

NO such publicity has been given to the Prix de Rome competition this Summer as last year's received, simply because the winner of the *grand prix* last year was a woman, and a woman still in her teens at that.

This year's winner, Marcel Dupré, was born in 1886 and as a child was a musical prodigy. The "first second" *grand prix* was won this year by Raymond de Pezzer, who practised law in Paris for five years before giving himself over to a musical career exclusively in 1911. Unlike most of the traditional prize winners, he has had no past at the Conservatoire. André Laporte, to whom was awarded the "second second" *grand prix*, was born in 1889 and has distinguished himself at the Conservatoire in various branches.

FROM the divorced wife of the late Felix Mottl an appeal for aid has been made to the German public. The first Frau Mottl was Henriette Standhartner, a singer at the Court Opera at Karlsruhe, when she became the wife of the distinguished conductor, who afterwards raised the Munich Court Opera to the rank of first in the land during his régime there following his long experience at Karlsruhe.

The marriage proved to be an incompatible one and only a year or so before his death Mottl succeeded in getting a divorce from his wife because of her financial extravagances, which apparently harassed him. A few days before his death, it will be recalled, he married the Munich dramatic soprano, Zdenka Fassbenicher, who has distinguished herself more especially by her acting than by her singing.

In her appeal to the public, in which she draws attention to what she considers her undeserved fate, Frau Standhartner-Mottl or Mottl-Standhartner, as the German custom will have it, explains that she has been trying to get established as a teacher of singing and diction, but since last January has not found a single pupil.

"All that now remains to me," she writes, "is a monthly income of \$25, and all that I wish to attain by this appeal to the public is the means to be able to earn a modest living as a singing teacher from the beginning of next season."

ONE of the obvious products of the "silly season," a period of unexpectedly brief duration this Summer, is

[Continued on next page]

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