

Music.

As a rule, we are somewhat apathetic and capricious about violin-playing in this country or in this city. We have a great deal of it winter by winter, and a great deal of it that is very good; but the audiences do not gather in sincere or contagious enthusiasm, expecting to hold their breaths over the fiddlings of the best man who draws the bow with magic art, as they do when it comes to the piano player or the singer. Young Henri Marteau last season and the season before received more favor and public patronage than any violinist coming to New York in many a year; and there were other than musical reasons for that vivacious young Frenchman's popularity that made him a rule-proving exception. These remarks are prefatory to recording the gratifying American début of Mr. Eugene Ysaye, our second Belgian violinist of the winter, at last week's two Philharmonics—and also a preface to observing that if ever any artist in his field of work absolutely dominated and captivated his audiences and made even the least critical understand that here was an article to be demonstratively appreciated, it was this altogether uncommon player and musician. From the first strike of his bow Mr. Ysaye fixed the attention of the house on him as one apart from even those famously apart. Such a reception, such unqualified delight in a soloist, the staid Philharmonics seldom exhibit. Mr. Ysaye is two things—a perfect technician and better yet a deeply sensitive esthetic musician. To make a comparison—not altogether kind but helpful—he has the two sides, two musical qualities, where Mr. César Thomson has only one. Mr. Thomson plays. Mr. Ysaye interprets. He exhibited every essential trait of a magnificent mastery over his violin that enchants the connoisseurs and those who think more of fingering than feeling. But he showed every range of emotion that a composer expects an artist to possess if the artist is to be a faithful interpreter of the score. Mr. Ysaye was heard in Saint Saëns B Minor Concerto; in Bruch's Scotch Fantasia, and, as encore numbers at the several concerts, in a violin Sonata by Bach, given with the greatest dignity and nobility, and an Etude by the airy Lauterbach, which came well as a bit of brilliant fireworks. He was tumultuously applauded and recalled, and has doubtless entered upon an especially popular visit here. The whole concert was on a high key of effectiveness—Mr. Seidl's strong program including Goldmark's rich "Sakuntala" Overture, a sonorous Helmesberger transcription for the string band of a Bach fugue; and Antonin Dvorak's unfailingly interesting "Sambo Symphony," if one may dare so to nickname it "From the New World."

The present week begins the third season at the Opera House of Italian and French opera under the potent management of Messrs. Abbey, Schoeffel & Grau, and one likely to prove dazzlingly brilliant. Never has a greater collocation of stars been brought into—let us hope—an harmonious group. Never has society taken a livelier interest in the prospectus of a long and full season. The repertory, doubtless, will leave considerable to be desired in the way of introducing us to European novelties of note. Therein we must be content to be disappointed. But so far as performances of older and familiar scores go, this should be an historic winter in New York. The company has already been fully set forth in this column, and the repertory. The operas and casts for this week—introducing several artists new to us, and many gladly welcomed back as of the first efficiency—are as follows: Monday evening, "Romeo and Juliette," to be sung in French, with the rôles divided among Mme. Melba, Jean de Reszké, Eduard de Reszké, Pol Plançon, Messrs. Castelmary, Mauguère, Gromzefski, Vaschetti, Rinaldini and Mmes. Bauermeister and de Vigne. Director, Mr. Luigi Mancinelli. Wednesday evening, "William Tell," in Italian, with Francesco Tamagno, Mr. Plançon, Mr. Abranioff, Mr. Ancona, and, in début, as *Mathilde*, Miss Lucille Hill, an American singer newly entered on a successful foreign career in several operatic cities. Friday evening, "Aida," with the New York débuts of Miss Lykia Drog (*Aida*), a dramatic soprano recently connected with several central European operatic establishments, and of Miss Eugenia Mantelli (*Amneres*); the *Radamis* will be Mr. Tamagno; *Amonasro*, a newcomer and a Portuguese, withal Mr. Victor Bensaude; the *King*, Mr. Alfonso Mariani, for the first time singing in this country, and *Ramfis* will be Mr. Eduard de Reszké. A remarkable cast Saturday will repeat Gounod's opera of Monday.