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FIRST CONCERT OF THE BATEMAN CONCERT COMPANY.

OPENING OF STEINWAY & SON'S NEW CONCERT HALL.

The new Concert Hall had the good fortune to be inaugurated by that most admirable and popular artist, Mlle. Parepa, supported by so many excellent artists. The following is a description of the plan and dimensions of the hall as furnished for general information :

The main entrance alike to these warerooms and the grand Music Hall, is through the elegant marble portico on Fourteenth-st., which has a width of 17 feet, and is supported by four Corinthian columns, forming a handsome vestibule, the floor of which is of Italian marble tile, of Mosaic pattern, and lighted by an elegant prismatic lantern. Here the ticket-office is located. From this vestibule on the ground floor two separate stairways, each seven feet wide, lead directly to the ground floor of the hall proper, into a spacious vestibule 42 feet in height from the floor to the roof, which is lighted and ventilated with the perfection of modern art. From this vestibule two grand entrances lead into the main hall, and two separate stairways conduct to the two balconies, each being independent of the other.

The dimensions of the Steinway Hall are: Length, 123 feet; width, 75 feet; height from floor to ceiling, 42 feet. Connecting with the main Hall, on the same level of the floor, directly opposite the stage, is a large room, 25 feet wide and 84 feet long, running to the front wall on Fourteenth st., which can be opened into or shut off from the main Hall, at pleasure, through the medium of sliding partition doors, affording room for 400 persons.

The entire building, from foundation to roof,

has been erected in a manner thoroughly substantial. The foundations are the solid bed of rock which crops out between Irving place, across Union square to Fifth ave. The basement walls of the building are of solid granite, three feet in thickness, thence to the roof the brick walls are two feet eight inches thick, with heavy external supporting buttresses. The whole of the walls, from foundation to roof, are laid in solid cement. In addition to the unusual strength of the exterior walls, the main floor of the Hall is carried by two supporting walls beneath it, extending directly from the foundation. The timber is all of extra size and strength, the floor has been thoroughly deafened by filling the spaces between the beams with non-conducting matter, thereby rendering the Hall impervious to the objectionable features of excessive vibration and elasticity of floor.

The front on Fifteenth st. is built of the finest Philadelphia front brick, with brown-stone trimmings, and finely ornamented pillars and caps. There are two balconies (one above the other) at the end of the Hall toward Fourteenth st., which extend on either side of the room about one-third of its length only.

The platform and stage are placed at the Fifteenth street end of the Hall, and extend entirely across it. Connecting with the Hall and stage on the westerly side there is an additional building on Fifteenth street, containing four elegant artists' dressing rooms, the upper story being devoted to the bellows, wind-chests, and some of the heavy work of the organ, which at present is located in the northwestern corner of the Hall, while the grand organ, when finished, will occupy the entire space from sidewalk to sidewalk.

The organ used for present purposes has been purchased from St. Thomas's Church, and had 32 stops. It has been thoroughly remodeled by its original builders, Messrs. Hall & Labaugh, who have added to it eight new registers. It will be completed by the beginning of December next.

The seating capacity of the hall is as follows: 1,300 seats on the main floor, 800 seats on the two balconies, and 400 seats in the extension room—in all 2,500 seats; all being permanently fixed iron-framed arm-chairs, cushioned with ruby leather—the seats being more roomy and more comfortable than in any other public building in the country. There is ample standing room for 500 additional persons, if needed. The aisles are unusually wide, as are also the spaces between the rows of seats. The means of ingress and egress are of the most capacious character, there being two additional exit doors, each seven feet wide, on either side of the stage, leading directly into Fifteenth street. The doors on both Fourteenth and Fifteenth streets, all open outward, allowing to hall to be cleared by its numerous stairways in three minutes, if necessary.

No attempt at frescoing the hall can, of course, be made until next Summer, when it will be decorated in the highest style of art; meanwhile the walls are hardfinished with a pearl tint, the ceiling being pure white. The hall is heated entirely by steam, on the most approved principles, admitting of the most perfect regulation of temperature. The steam generator is placed in an outside building some distance from the hall.

The New Steinway Hall is illuminated by two of De Frie's patent sunlights, imported from London at a vast expense. These sunlights, the merits of which have been fully tested in a large number of public buildings in England, light the Hall from the ceiling, illuminating the room perfectly

by a brilliant flood of light, which is softened and rendered highly agreeable to the eye by rows of crystal prisms encircling the reflectors.

The following firms have been engaged in the construction of the Hall: mason work, Marc Eidlitz; carpenter work, Isaac Lewis; timber framer, Hess & Son; slate roofer, W. Conolly & Co.; plastering, Power Bros.; gas-fitters and importers of the patent sunlights, Geo. H. Kitchen & Co.; chair manufacturer, B. Kœchling; iron work, M. Grosz & Son.

The appearance of the Hall when lighted up and filled as it was on this occasion, is one of comfort and cheerfulness. We do not admire the shape of the room, we should have preferred a semicircular room, and also rounded ends, as in St. James Hall, London, which is probably the most perfect hall in the world. We think also that the second gallery might be dispensed with, with good effect to the appearance of the hall. It would lessen the seating capacity, of course, but we believe it would help the hall, both in appearance and in sonority. The outlines of the galleries are essentially inelegant, but they have the one excellence of affording to the visitors the most delightful seats in the house. The seats are really delightful—ample in width and in the space between the rows. The lighting, too, is essentially beautiful. Calm and diffusing, copious and without glare, it is altogether the pleasantest means of illuminating a public building that we have yet seen. It would be unfair to criticise the details of the hall in its present unfinished state. When the hands of competent artists shall have thrown over the walls and ceiling the charms of the pencil, directed by fancy and art, its appearance will be smoothed down, and its proportions will appear as better harmonized.

Judging from what we heard last night, its acoustic properties will prove entirely satisfactory when the walls are fairly dry. At present the vibrations are rather slow, they lack the brightness which is found in a thoroughly finished and well-seasoned building; but, considering the exacting trial of last night, the acoustic properties were very bravely developed. This new Concert Hall is creditable in every way to the business enterprise of the house of Steinway & Sons. They have supplied a great public want, they have spared no expenditure to make it worthy of the purpose, and we are satisfied that in a pecuniary point of view alone they will find their enterprise nobly rewarded.

The novelty of the Hall fully divided the attention of the public with the old favorites and the new artists, but Mlle. Parepa received a very cordial greeting. She looks handsomer and younger than when she left us a few months ago. Her voice is as fresh as ever, and her management of it as correct and artistic, but she did not seem as certain in her use of it. She seemed in the first act as though afraid to trust it in that

new locality, and her intonation was not so generally true as usual. In the second act, however, she recovered all her artistic aplomb, and sang one of her specialit  songs deliciously, exciting the warmest enthusiasm and commanding an uproarious encore. She is on all points a delightful artist, and fascinates the public by the rich melody of her voice, and her perfect mastery over all the vocal resources. This evening will doubtless find her in full possession of that artistic ease which enables her to glamour and charm all her hearers.

The appearance of Signor Brignoli was the signal for the heartiest and most cordial applause that we ever saw awarded to an artist in a concert-room. The applause rose and fell, and rose again and again, so that Brignoli seemed to be painfully embarrassed; but it seemed to cheer him on to his labors, for he sang his first song most charmingly. His voice is as beautiful as ever, but it gives evidence of more careful and intelligent culture. He attends more carefully to the nuances of vocalism; he carries his voice better, and his diminuendoes on holding notes are artistically executed and wonderfully effective. Of course he won a unanimous encore. In his duo with Parepa he seemed a little lazy, from sympathy, perhaps, for Parepa was lazy too, but his second song he sang with so much grace, finish, and sentiment, that he was greeted by an encore which he was compelled to acknowledge, and replied to by the Serenade from Don Pasquale, most delightfully rendered. We are happy to be able to record, at last, that New York has heart enough to acknowledge an old favorite. The reception of Brignoli afforded the only proof of that fact that we have witnessed for 25 years.

The two new singers, Ferranti and Fortuna, are very excellent artists. Fortuna has a good voice, which he uses artistically, although he is not remarkably for his coloring. Still he sings gracefully and with good finish, and will certainly become a favorite with our public. Ferranti is uproariously demonstrative; he is full of humor and he does not attempt to conceal it, but overflows with gesticulation, grimaces and vocal expletives. He has too much animal life, and will bear a good deal of toning down. He sings with spirit and animation, and seemed to give unqualified delight to his hearers. In his parlando singing he requires more lightness and velocity, but he is sure to win his way to the favor of the public.

Carl Rosa gives evidence of careful study. He has certainly improved since we last heard him, both in the roundness of his tone and the brilliancy of his execution. But he is still cold, unmoved and unsympathetic, and he will never achieve that free, broad tone by which passion alone can be simulated while he allows his bow to hug the strings so closely and so continuously. He plays well, but rather with

the uncertainty of the scholar than the passion and bravoura of a master.

Mr. S. B. Mills played the first movement of Schumann concert in A Minor, superbly. His grasp of the instrument is certainly splendid. Self-assured and unerring, he keeps every passage clear, and makes every note tell. He interpreted his author faithfully, preserving all the delicate coloring, and throwing into the broad effects more *abandon* than usually distinguishes his manner. In all respects his performance was masterly, and fully deserved the cordial applause which it received.

Mr. J. L. Hatton accompanies elegantly and judiciously, but he may not know that preluding is out of fashion in our concert rooms.

The orchestra was badly arranged. The brass instruments were raised so high above the others that in the *forte* passages the violins were utterly inaudible. This was particularly noticeable in the finale of the overture to the Tannhauser, when not one note of that wonderful, streaming, falling figure for the violins could be distinguished. Either the stringed instruments were too weak or the brass was woefully misplaced. The fault should be remedied this evening, in justice to the works to be performed.

The second of the Bateman concerts will take place this evening at Steinway's Hall, when all the artists of the company will appear.

SIGNOR SEVERINI'S CONCERT AT IRVING HALL.

The first concert of Signor Severini took place at Irving Hall on Saturday evening, and was attended by a large, brilliant, and very critical audience. Signor Severini is a young man of very pleasing manners and appearance, but Italian only in name. He is an accomplished gentleman, speaking several languages, and singing in all with equal fluency, grace and comprehension. His voice is a tenor of light and very beautiful quality, which he uses tastefully and skilfully. Its compass is sufficient, and the quality is equal and melodious throughout the scale. His school is ornate, the natural flexibility of his voice has been improved by study, and his execution is free, facile and well articulated. There are few living tenors who can execute with such lightness and precision. He sang the German Lieds with much taste and expression, closing them with great effect by the perfect control of his voice. His Italian singing illustrated the points we have described, and proved that beside possessing brilliance and pathos, he has an excellent appreciation of humor. The use of the falsetto, which is so generally accepted in Europe, proved an unquestionable failure in the scenaded aria, from "Marino Falliero." Our public dislike the quality of the tones, and emphatically disapprove of their use. Besides, Signor Severini did not achieve the same results by

the same means as Rubini controlled. Rubini struck the highest notes with a clear, firm, but attenuated chest tone, which was as beautiful as it was remarkable, while Severini reached them in falsetto, and by an effort which roughened and depraved the quality, producing rather a thin shout than a clear and well-defined note. The contrast of the qualities of the tones was unpleasant, and produced an effect by no means intended by the singer. The aria itself was very charmingly sung, exhibiting the true concert style, namely, an absence of all shouting, but in its place, grace, taste, expression, and an emphasis sufficient without stage exaggeration.

In Beethoven's beautiful aria, "Adelaida," his rendering was deficient in depth of expression and impulsive passion; but he sang it tenderly and smoothly, and won a determined encore, to which he responded by singing that old favorite but rarely heard ballad, "Oft in the Silly Night," in a manner so sweet, tender and expressive as to call forth the enthusiastic applause of the audience. He sang the "Addio," duo, from "La Sonnambula," with Mme. Johannsen, very charmingly; but its delicate effects were marred by that lady constantly falling from the pitch.

Signor Severini's other marked success was the popular English ballad, "Ever of Thee," which he sang deliciously, charming his hearers by the admirable management of his voice, and by his tender and expressive style. He gained an enthusiastic encore, and sung in response a pleasant Italian canzone, with spirit and effect. Signor Severini displayed on the occasion of his debut, a versatility in style but rarely achieved by a vocalist, and in each he displayed a thorough mastery of its sentiment and character. His pronunciation of the several languages was refined and beautiful, and his enunciation in all was so clearly articulated that every word could be distinctly heard. This is one of his secrets of success, and in this he affords an example which all our singers would do well to follow. His debut was an unquestionable success. He exhibits attractive qualities which mark him out as a star singer, and when he becomes more familiar with the taste of our American audiences, he will achieve a popularity which but few artists have attained in this country.

We would suggest to Signor Severini, either never to accompany himself, or to learn the correct harmonies of the songs he does accompany.

Mme. Johannsen sang her selection well, but rapid execution is by no means her forte, and therefore she should leave it to younger and fresher voices.

Signor Centemeri sang in capital style. He exhibits a rich vein of humor, and dashes through his music with a genial spirit which makes his singing both attractive and effective. He is a talented and excellent artist.