

## CHICAGO OPERA IN HIGH RANK

European Productions Called  
Much Inferior

By RICHARD C. BURRITT

A wanderer through opera-land returns to Chicago with at least one thought planted deep as a religious belief and as strongly as a scientific certainty. And that, that nowhere in the world is grand opera presented on a more splendid scale and by better artists than it is presented by the Chicago Civic Opera company at its home theater, the Auditorium.

The two great opera companies in the United States, the Chicago company and the Metropolitan of New York, have under contract practically all of the great artists to be found anywhere. Their orchestras and their chorus and their productions as a whole are second to none, and so much greater and finer than most that to compare the great American companies with the majority of those abroad, save for one extraordinary institution—La Scala, at Milan—is nothing short of musical sacrilege.

A wanderer through opera-land abroad, having heard packed audiences in famous theaters cheer second rate performances and applaud artists who would not be acceptable, for instance, in Chicago except in minor roles or as spear carriers, cannot help but feel that Chicago audiences, as a whole, have no conception of the true artistic value of the performances that are offered them night after night for eleven and one-half weeks.

It would appear that a real appreciation of the performances by the Chicago Civic Opera company will, to a large extent, always be lacking in so far as Chicago audiences are concerned, for Chicago audiences do not have a basis of comparison that makes the performances of the Chicago company stand out in the light of their worth.

Opera is being given in most countries in Europe today, and acceptable too to those countries, that Chicagoans would not tolerate. As a matter of fact if the Chicago company were to offer its subscribers and patrons productions such as those that are the rule in most opera houses in Europe, the company would lose its subscribers. They would walk out in a body. The company would not continue. Chicago would refuse to listen. In one week the city would turn a cold shoulder.

In Europe today, when an opera succeeds in obtaining the services of one artist of the caliber of those who will appear at every performance at the Auditorium theater this season, the occasion is one for great rejoicing. Merely billing such an artist's name on one of the boards before the theater is sufficient to sell-out the house overnight. And in such instances, the cost is generally raised considerably, and often doubled. And being doubled, opera-goers cheerfully pay the increased price and ask for more.

Members of the Chicago company are royally received wherever they go in Europe. They have only to let it be known that they are willing to sing a few times, for example, during the late spring and summer, and the messenger boys "come strolling" with sheaves of telegraphed offers.

During the summer in many parts of Europe, several music lovers told the writer that they wished they might spend a winter in Chicago to attend Chicago Civic Opera.

"Surely," said one, "you have no difficulty in selling out the theater on subscription, have you? If you have, your people in Chicago do not realize what a great privilege they have—what a great treat."

## CALL TAXPAYERS TO PUBLIC HEARING TUESDAY

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dyke. This will also serve to tamp down and preserve the dyke.

It is part of the plan of improvement that the 40 acres west of the old nine is to be developed for golf, thereby squaring out an "L." A plan for the development of the new and large course will be worked out and will be carried out with gradual changes, so that the 18 hole course as finally completed will include the new holes located on this additional land acquired by this improvement. When this course is completed, the golfers of the Winnetka Park district will have something to be proud of, also something that they can play on throughout the season without having to wear rubber boots.

It is hoped that the public hearing to be held next Monday evening will be attended by all those having any suggestions or objections and all those in favor of this improvement, as this meeting is the only official opportunity which the Park board has to determine the attitude of the public toward the improvement.

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