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RAVINIA APPROACHES FINAL PERFORMANCES

Closing Fortnight to Witness Depiction of Best in Three Great Opera Schools

Next Week at Ravinia

- Sunday, August 28 "Aida"
- Monday, August 29 "Manon"
- Tuesday, August 30 "The Love of Three Kings"
- Wednesday, August 31 "The Masked Ball"
- Thursday, September 1 "Tosca"
- Friday, September 2 "Lohengrin"
- Saturday, September 3 "Samson and Delilah"

Three national schools of opera—the Italian, French and German—have been drawn upon to provide the tenth calendar week of Ravinia opera and concerts, which will begin Sunday, August 28. If it is the idea of Louis Eckstein—and no doubt it is—to give Ravinia patrons during the week which comes just before the close of the season, a repertoire which is broad in scope, perfect in balance, and replete in interest, he has undoubtedly succeeded. It is no small task when, during the course of a season the

repertoire has been as extensive as has that at Ravinia this year, to select seven operas which may be said to be highly representative of the most popular which have been offered, and to present them within the scope of one week. Yet a glance at the Ravinia announcements for the week just ahead, would be sufficient to convince any confirmed opera-goer that this has been done.

The program includes four Italian works—"Aida," "The Love of Three Kings," "The Masked Ball" and "Tosca." Two French operas, "Manon" and "Samson and Delilah" are to be given during the week, while "Lohengrin" is the German work which has been scheduled. If examined as to composers it is found that Verdi, most prolific of the Italian writers of operatic music, is represented twice—by "Aida" and "The Masked Ball," and that these two works reveal their creator in entirely different moods. Of the moderns of the Italian school Montemezzi, one of the most worthy of all the moderns, will display his genius through the medium of "The Love of Three Kings," while Puccini, a universal favorite among the moderns, will be represented by "Tosca."

Wagner's "Lohengrin"

There is no French composer more beloved of present day audiences than Massenet, and it is only natural that his sparkling gem, "Manon," should be given place in a carefully chosen repertoire of this kind. Camille Saint-Saens may be rated as a classicist, but "Samson and Delilah" is such a perfect combination of all the arts that it holds high place in the regard of all American opera patrons, and it is good that it is to be heard again at Ravinia this year. When it comes to German opera, Richard Wagner occupies a pedestal that is all his own, and of this great master's works there is none more popular in this country than the stately and tuneful "Lohengrin."

This selection of operas likewise gives the coterie of world artists at Ravinia this season opportunity to appear to best advantage in those roles most perfectly suited to their manifold talent as singers and actors. Madame Rethberg and Mr. Martinelli, for instance, are cast as Aida and Radames in the opera "Aida," which is to be presented on Sunday night. Madame Gall and Mr. Chamlee have special opportunity for superb singing and acting in Massenet's "Manon," which is to be given as an extra performance on Monday night. Madame Bori stands pre-eminent as Fiora in "The Love of Three Kings," scheduled for Tuesday night, while opposite her as Avito, Mr. Johnson appears in a role which is much to his liking. Mr. Basiola has excellent opportunity for fine singing as Manfredo in this opera, while Virgilio Lazzari gives his greatest characterization as Archibaldo, the blind king.

"The Masked Ball," which is Wednesday night's offering, provides Madame Rethberg, Mr. Martinelli and Mr. Danise with three outstanding parts in which singing and acting are equally combined. Miss Macbeth is likewise happily cast in this melodious work. Madame Gall again has unlimited chance in "Tosca," which is to be given on Thursday night, and in this opera Mr. Danise has demonstrated his unusual artistry as Scarpia. Mr. Chamlee likewise has a splendid opportunity for singing as Cavaradossi.

Martinelli as "Samson"

"Lohengrin" brings Madame Rethberg to her native school of opera, and had Wagner written the part of Elsa to her special order it could have fitted her no better. Mr. Johnson is one of the most heroic of the Lohengrins. "Samson and Delilah," which will be heard on Saturday night, has, in Giovanni Martinelli, one of the greatest exponents of the biblical giant the world has ever known.

(Continued on page 20)

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