

## MUSICAL MATTERS.

### The Juch Company in "Carmen" at the Boston Last Night.

The unfortunate Carmen was assassinated in the fourth act of the opera last night, but Bizet was murdered in each act. Not all the agonized gestures of Mr. Neucendorff, nor all his diligent rappings upon his stand, could prevent the massacre. Even Juch who is generally to be relied on, was a failure in the role of Carmen. Incongruous as it may appear, there was a slight flavor of Elsa in her gypsy, that made it tender and loving—and tame, where it ought to have been coquettish, insincere and treacherous. Of course it is too much to expect, that any actress or singer shall quite catch the idea which underlies Prosper Merimee's novel; even Bizet, I think, has not wholly represented this, for, unless I greatly mistake, the author desires to picture Carmen as flirting with all men with candid shiffulness, but only feeling love when Escamillo, the bull-fighter, awakens it; but at least the yearning and longing vein of the first act was misplaced, and the mere swagger with which the walk of the singer was embellished, was not sufficient to make one entirely believe in the total depravity of the character.

There seemed to be a latent goodness about Carmen which, in this case, was irritating. The Habanera was as gentle as "Elsa's dream" might have been, and the vocal part of the second act (the sensuous Spanish dance music) was equally mellifluous. There was probably a physical difficulty at times in the case, for the part is too low for Miss Juch's voice, and in all the vehement and passionate reproaches of the second act, her voice was nearly inaudible. The high note in the ensemble music, at the end of the Toreador song, was transferred from Frasquita's part, to that of Carmen, and Miss Juch rang this out with such effect that the number won the only hearty encore of the evening. A blonde, statuesque Carmen, with spasmodic fits of violence, and a sort of hysterical fit of anger in the last act, could not, however, be atoned for by a splendid high note. Micaela was very good in character, but very bad in vocalization; in fact the first shipwreck that occurred was largely owing to her insecurity in the first act, directly she had entered. Her aria in the third act was also better in intention than in execution.

Mr. Hedmonet as Don Jose was sometimes quite good, vocally, and sang the "Dragon d'Alcala" in good intonation, which not all operatic tenors do, but his acting was lamentably tame, and the result was that a very sedate pair of lovers were the principals in this opera of fire and passion. The beautiful ensemble music of the second act was spoiled, and the card trio of the third act was not at all impressive. Mr. Stoddard was not brilliant in the great Toreador song, and a basso with a bad attack of ague, judging by his vibrato, gave the part of Zuniga with quavering uncertainty. It is not pleasant to say such things, and I must hasten to add that the troupe was at its worst in this opera, and therefore it is not to be taken as a criterion of their merits in other works, but certainly "Carmen" is not an inspiring success as this company give it.

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