

A New Jewish Nightingale

Rebecca Weinstein Will Retain Her Jewish Name.

By

HILDA KASSELL.

Rebecca Weinstein, the seventeen-year-old daughter of poor New York parents, who has recently made her operatic debut in Pagliacci, gives promise of making an outstanding name for herself in the world of opera.

ON the East Side of New York, there where the shadows of despair and poverty are subtly tinted with the light of eternal hope, one can find Rebecca Weinstein.

Rebecca Weinstein, she who lives on the second floor back of a decrepit old tenement house and dreams the everlasting dream of success. For Rebecca is not only beautiful but she is young and ambitious. At seventeen, when one is beautiful and young, one is always ambitious, and so it is with her.

She hopes to sing operatic roles. She hopes with all the intensity and passion of youth to sing before vast audiences and enthrall them, as she has done, not so long ago, at the Longacre Theatre. It was only recently that she made her operatic debut at the Longacre, and not only were the connoisseurs of music there to hear her, but the East Side had dusted off its shabby hat, and had come to pay tribute to its daughter.

She sang the role of Nedda, and if floral offerings are indications of the admiration inspired, then Rebecca has truly deserved the name of "The Jewish Nightingale." After the performance, for more than half an hour she was applauded and cheered and showered with flowers. It was a triumphal achievement, and none were there who did not acknowledge it.

Rebecca hopes always to be known and to sing under the name of Rebecca Weinstein, and places her faith for her success in the quality of her voice rather than in the doubtful possibilities of an adopted name.

She is now a member of the Metropolitan Opera Chorus, and already she has poise and self-assurance, but what I was particularly struck by was the incongruity of seeing this promising, beautiful girl in the dingy kitchen of an East Side tenement house. She apologised with the graciousness of a queen because her mother, who was away shopping, was not there to receive me. While I sat and chatted with her she was busy setting the table for supper—pumpnickel and herring not omitted. She is still attending high school, but expects to be graduated from the Washington Irving commercial course in June.

My Father's Bible

By George Alexander Kohut.

*There is one book, far dearer than the rest,
Upon my treasured shelves: It is not bound
In costly skin or vellum, yet profound
Is the esteem and reverence in my breast,
As I now lift it from its wonted place,
To bless it first, and read it for a space—
It gives me comfort now, though time was when
Fierce anguish smote my soul, as, all unseen,
The crumbled leaves I turned, and saw between
The crystal drops of sorrow once again
Which rung my blessed father's spirit then—
But now I read it, ever so serene,
And close the Bible gently, when I've done,
And kiss its covers, too, when I'm done.*

By Courtesy of Jewish Exponent.

"It doesn't hurt to know business, does it?" she asked with a sad smile. For in another room her father, who had been ill for several years was resting.

"I am the oldest of seven children, you see," she continued to talk nervously, "and my father has been too sick to work. One never can tell if I may not have to use my knowledge of stenography and typing."

And because her father was sleeping, Rebecca would not sing for me for fear of disturbing him. Instead she proudly displayed her trophies—a silver loving cup presented to her by her maestro, Nicola D'Amico, and the pupils of the D'Amico Grand Opera Studio, also a scrap book in which she is carefully preserving the press notices of her debut, where she is as lavishly and as often praised for her beauty as for her achievements as a singer.

Rebecca is turning longing eyes towards Italy—the land of song. She hopes some day to go to Naples and there continue her studies.

"I don't know when I'll ever get there," she hastily added, but did not include that Mrs. Henry Morgenthau, wife of the former Ambassador to Turkey, who is at present in Europe, had heard her sing while she was in New York, and since where there is smoke there must be a fire to corroborate the recurrent rumours throughout the East Side that Rebecca will yet realise her ambition.

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