

GERSTER Etelka

1878

MADAME GERSTER, IN OPERA.

Madame Gerster has become a great favorite in New York. (A critic says: "She has now been heard in three characters, *Amina*, *Lucia*, and *Gilda*, and in each she has proved herself to be an artist without blemish, and a vocalist whose powers are phenomenal. In *Rigolletto*, Madame Gerster shone with a steady lustre in whatever she had to do, and the 'Caro Nome,' which is, as it were, the essence of the naive and pure nature of the young girl's rejoicing in its happiness, was made the climax for that marvellous vocalization for which she is famous. Throughout the staccato notes and all the florid embellishments, in which the tone was diminished and increased with an agility and precision that ravished the ear, she managed to convey the sentiment of the situation. Mistress of all that is possible in execution, Madame Gerster is also a true artiste, whose singing is imbued with the 'atmosphere' of whatever character she undertakes. This fact made amends for some lack of breadth in the cantabile passages. Nothing could have been better conceived than her rendering of the 'Tutte le festa,' and in the succeeding duo her expressive features supplied an unerring reflex of the passionate situation, while her voice rang out with penetrating clearness. Madame Gerster's singing in the quartette was not only forcible, but inexpressibly touching, and, indeed, in the concerted music, she left nothing to be desired. Her voice in its higher flights is sure to be convincing; it is only in those passages which lie in the middle register that we miss something of power as a songstress. Happily, Madame Gerster's acting comes to the rescue at these moments, and in transcribing the impressions of her *Gilda*, we must pay tribute to the unflinching truth of her embodiment of one of the most exquisite of Verdi's heroines."

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