

Juliana Gales May

(- 22 Feb 1901)

The Evening Star, January 22, 1856

Miss May -- the New American Soprano

Below the reader will find an extract from the Paris correspondent of the Philadelphia North American concerning the rising American cantatrice. Many of our fellow-citizens will remember her as Miss Juliana May, the daughter of our late fellow-citizens, Dr. George May, and the cousin of Dr. John Frederick May, the Hon. Henry May, and Col. Charles A. May, U.S.A. Her mother is the daughter of the late Theodore Lee, Esq., and the sister of Mrs. Joseph Gales of this city. Possessing a remarkable voice and figure, the latter giving evidence of a strong constitution, this talented and beautiful young lady has studied her profession much longer and more assiduously, under the best masters of Italy, than any other American. We have frequently heard of her eminent success and promise, from travelers on the continent, and have looked forward to hear of her brilliant debut with great interest indeed. We fear that it will be some years before she returns to the United States, as the Empressarios of Europe will hardly be apt to let such an operatic card as she turns out to be, slip through their fingers, if money can retain her in Europe.

"An American cantatrice is rising on the musical horizon, and, to judge from present efforts, bids fair to shed abroad no faint light when she attains to her noonday attitude; or, in more appropriate language, to make her roulades and fioretture heard some day far and wide. Miss May is the name of this American swan, or nightingale, whichever appellation the lady most delights in -- a songstress not unknown, if I am rightly informed, to the musical world of Philadelphia, and now just returned with renewed inspiration from Italy

The Evening Star, January 21, 1856

Miss Juliana May has completed her musical studies in Italy and will soon return to this country. She is said to have a powerful sweet and well-toned voice which has been most exquisitely cultivated.

The New York Times, 1857

Miss May's Concert

Miss Juliana May, an attractive American lady, who has recently returned from Europe, where she has been pursuing a course of thorough musical instruction, made her debut here on Tuesday night, (Niblo's Saloon,) and was greeted by a fair audience. Miss May sang three solos and assisted in a couple of concerted pieces, thereby affording her hearers ample opportunity of forming a judgment of her probable powers. We say probable, for although Miss May seemed to be but slightly affected by the novelty of her situation, it is but reasonable to suppose that greater assurance of her public, will give her increased ease, and better nerve for delivering the many polished elegances of the musical art which may only be touched by the firmest hand. Miss May's voice has been trained with much success, the most noticeable result being a perfect equality of tone. This is the more creditable inasmuch as it is of a hard and naturally intractable character. It is neither a mezzo soprano nor a contralto voice, but partakes of the characters of both kinds, with most of the coloring of the last named. Miss May has achieved some flexibility, and can fly to the higher regions with melodiousness and ease, but there is at present an apparent hardness in the immediately available compass of her voice., Its full vibratory quality and sonority have not yet been developed, and we are, therefore, justified in believing that, with practice, Miss May will greatly improve. A lack of animation---of musical electricity -- we may also kindly

refer to, as an evidence of recent routine which may well be dispensed with. Without any exhibition of great powers, we look on Miss May's debut as a success of which she may be proud, and as one which gives promise of future excellence. It is unnecessary to refer to the pieces in which she sang. They were of the usual concert pattern, and mostly from Verdi.

The National Republican, July 12, 1869, p. .4

Rededication of the Calvary Baptist Church

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The solo, "Show me Thy ways, O Lord," was then sung with much feeling by Miss Juliana May.

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May. At her residence in this city, February 22, 1901, Juliana Gales May, youngest daughter of the late Dr. George W. May. Funeral services at Saint John's Episcopal Church on Monday morning at 10 o'clock. Interment private.