

OTIS SKINNER IN OLD BAGDAD

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Editorial Triumph Is This Absorbing Work of a Native Author, Brought from England Tale of a Man's Ups and Downs in One Changeful Day.

The Christmas night audience at the Knickerbocker Theatre was transported from its holiday mood into a land of eternal festivity as it watched "Kismet" unfold its beauties for three hours last night in the glowing eyes of a workaday world.

Edwards Knickerbocker has caught in this play made from a story by the Arabian Nights the spirit of the ancient East without its splendor and color, its pageantry and its setting life to surfeit the eye with their beauty.

This idealized picture of existence in the days in which Scheherazade spun her tales is of course draped over a dramatic structure which serves its purpose with enough to set tingling other nerves when the sense of sight has had its fill.

Miss Skinner as Hezr is the leading figure in the successive episodes which "Kismet" reveals. He is a beggar in that Bagdad of many years ago in which life seems so many sudden and lofty ascents, then so many quick, deep drops into misery or oblivion that the United States as a land of unlimited possibilities seems a conventional place of residence in comparison.

In the fatalistic belief of Bagdad's people every man had his clay. This alone reasoning age allows fate to interfere only in the lives of dogs. But in the Arabian Nights men also fell under the action of its laws.

Against the sun baked walls of Bagdad's narrow streets he has met the enemy who would strip him of his wealth and send him to the gallows. He has had a purse of gold for the blessing he ignorantly bestowed on them, he has seen silk and other fine fabrics from the merchants and decked out his fair daughter and himself in them before he is brought to the court of the Wazir who makes him swear to murder the Commander of the Faithful, their Caliph.

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The patrons of the Metropolitan had opportunities to hear and see two representatives of the fabled hero. These were Mme. Homer and Miss Dolta. It may have been supposed that Mme. Homer's attention to the duties of motherhood would at least defer till late in the season another presentation of the work, which Gluck's opera had by another interpretation of the role in Mme. Matzenberg, the distinguished German contralto, who has already established herself in the favor of this public.

It was therefore with no small measure of interest that the Monday night audience adjourned from Christmas dinners to the opera house last evening, for curiosity about a new interpretation is always quick to arouse interest in those who are in contemplation of Mme. Matzenberg's "Orfeo" went away torn by conflicting emotions, as they say in novels.

The singer has a voice which ought to play the scale of Orfeo's feelings even as he sweeps the strings of his lyre. One would expect to hear all the plaint and prayer of "Divinites Sicut," and the other the Metropolitan version, and the hopelessness of "Canto senza Euridice." Mme. Matzenberg's style is resplendent in large measure, but she is not so perfect as she abundantly proved in her "Amoris, her Orfeo, her Brangone."

But it remained to see whether she could control her expression of emotion with the loquacity and dignity of that style in which Gluck aimed at his "grand simplicity." It might be going beyond the truth to say that she perfectly succeeded, for in the inferno scene she followed moments of real pathos with others in which the phrases were somewhat overdone. The other two principal parts were Leonora Spinkes as Amor and Miss Gluck as Euridice. Mr. Toscanini conducted, and again conducted superbly, the orchestra. The Gluck's genius, as the pictorial features of the opera again gave delight.

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It's in the Balkans, Where Plot Comes Easily Christine Nielsen in a Leading Role Many Good Songs and Many Encores the First Night.

In "The Wedding Trip" which had its first New York production at the Broadway Theatre last night, there was more to remind one of the early successes of Reginald De Koven than anything that this company has recently produced. There was good music, notably in the ensemble numbers, which were perfectly within the capacity of quite a capable company to sing, plenty of action, pleasing stage pictures and a story that is of sufficient interest to hold the attention and furnish pleasing surprises. It gave a promise to that comic opera may yet be as a formidable rival to the musical piece more popular at present.

The three acts of "The Wedding Trip" are laid in the real land of the comic opera among the changing and colorful scenes of the Balkans, which most people have quite agreed is the land of the comic operakings and princesses. There are thus presented all the possible opportunities for most any starting adventure and for picturesque people with most bewildering costumes and customs.

Felix, who lives in a little country town of Dalmatia, is perfectly happy to be the bridegroom of Feliz, whom his parents had chosen as his bride and whom all the people of the neighborhood had congratulated to turn out in honor on his bridal day. But Felix had a rolicking brother, Fennois, who was constantly falling in love with every pretty girl that he met and who was in turn loved by them. Fennois had oversteered his leave and if something was not done immediately he would be executed as a traitor.

Every other plan had been exhausted and now Felix must get out of Dalmatia and rejoin his brother, and that on the very day that he had married. To poor simple minded Felix fell the task of straightening out all the difficulties in which his brother had involved himself, at the same apposing the anger of his bride. All this was enough, but to add to his burdens he had the prospect of a brigand band that had the most ridiculous way of coming down to Laguzza on the coast, kidnapping all the women of the town and carrying them away to the mountains. He did all that was expected of him, and even more, in a truly comic manner, and thus brought everything to the happy ending that every such plot should afford.

WHOLE TOWN SEKS GIRL

Churches and Schools of Winchester Hunt for Missing Girl

Churches and schools of Winchester are hunting for a missing girl. The search has not been one of merrymaking in one town in Connecticut. The usual festivities have been omitted and residents of Winchester have engaged in a fortnight's search for a missing young woman.

Nine days have passed since the disappearance of her home of Miss Margaret Considine, and though the woods and banks of Still River were swarming with searchers all of yesterday and today no clue has been discovered. During the last week schools were dismissed in order that the children might assist in the search. On Sunday the churches were empty, as everybody in the borough was scouring the country thereabout.

This search to strengthen the theory that the girl suddenly had become insane and thrown herself into Still River. However, when denouncing failed to bring the body to the surface, the attention of the searchers was devoted to the woods. Tuesday morning the employees of the Winsted Hosiery Company, where the missing woman was employed, received a letter from their hospital fund for the discovery of Miss Considine within one week from date and that afternoon the warden and burgoes announced a reward of \$100 for her discovery.

Miss Considine lived with her sister Miss Mary, who is employed at the Winsted Hosiery Company's factory. The young woman, who had been in ill health, disappeared the evening of December 16. Immediate search showed that her cloak and a pair of Juliette slippers were missing, but her hat and several umbrellas that stood near the door had not been disturbed, although it was raining.

Miss Considine's disappearance has caused a great deal of concern in the town. Her father, Mr. J. H. Considine, is a well-known merchant in Winchester. The girl was about 20 years of age and was very popular in the town. Her disappearance has caused a great deal of concern in the town. Her father, Mr. J. H. Considine, is a well-known merchant in Winchester. The girl was about 20 years of age and was very popular in the town.

NO WAUDEVILLE WAR BY BECK

He's Merely Extending His Business as the Government Directs for the Encouragement of Competition Won't Be a Vaudeville Playhouse Anyway

Chicago, Dec. 25.—Fear of trust prosecution has seized America's all-powerful vaudeville combine, and the East and West territory, it is asserted, has been re-scinded, according to Martin Beck, head of the Orpheum Circuit, the Western power, who was in Chicago yesterday.

James H. Wilkinson, United States District Attorney, admitted after Mr. Beck's arrival that there were possibilities of a trust case in the theatrical situation. "There undoubtedly could be violations of the anti-trust law there, but Federal action along that line would be started in Washington. We know nothing of it here," he said.

Mr. Beck admitted that there was no chance of war and denied that there ever had been a written agreement controlling vaudeville booking. "Will the agreement between yourself and the Keith interests be renewed next Tuesday?" he was asked. "What agreement? I know of no agreement," he replied.

"Haven't there been an agreement by which you booked all houses west of Cincinnati and the Keiths those east?" "We've worked that way, but there has been no written agreement." "Your plan to build a theatre in New York city isn't that in violation of the understanding, such as the Keiths have been making?" "I am doing as the Government wishes, extending." And with his closing remark he climbed on the Twentieth Century New York boat.

Mr. Beck's visit to Chicago was the result of a long agreement between the Keith interests and the Orpheum circuit for years by which their operations were confined to their respective districts, said Lyman B. Glover, manager of the Majestic Theatre. The Orpheum circuit books exclusively for the Majestic, and all invasions on the part of one another are provided for by special dispensation. Mr. Beck's New York theatre will not be a vaudeville house and will not constitute a violation of the agreement.

J. HARPER SMITH

New Jersey Capitalist Who began Work as a Mill Operative

SOMERVILLE, N. J., Dec. 25.—After signing a number of checks as Christmas gifts to his servants J. Harper Smith, a retired woolen manufacturer, died this morning at his home on Belmont place of Bright's disease. He had been ill for a long time. Mr. Smith had signed the last of the checks and presented it to his housekeeper, when he arose from his desk and placed his hand over his heart. He staggered across the room to the table where his wife was seated and died in her arms. Her medical aid could be summoned. He was 77 years of age.

From a mill operative he became a mill owner and at the time of his death he was reported to be one of the wealthiest men in central New Jersey with large real estate holdings and a number of neighboring cities. For more than forty years he was associated with the Knickerbocker Theatre in New York city in the manufacture of woolen goods. His office was at 221 Fourth avenue, Manhattan. He retired from the manufacturing business about three years ago after the death of his only son, Harry Smith, who was superintendent of the Somerset Woolen Mills.

J. Harper Smith was formerly a member of the State Epileptic Village Commission and a vestryman of St. John's Episcopal Church of this place. He recently built a stone rectory for St. John's Church at the cost of several thousand dollars as a memorial to his son.

PREMONITION OF DEATH. Fulfilled When Witness of Recent Tragedies Passes Away. TARRYTOWN, N. Y., Dec. 25. Henry Palmer, a veteran of the civil war, died at the home of his son, Frank A. Palmer, this morning from heart failure. Mr. Palmer had a premonition that his end was near. Two weeks ago today he was walking up the Harlem tracks north of White Plains with his brother when an engine struck and killed his brother. Mr. Palmer was a policeman in Tarrytown and for years was a policeman in Tarrytown. After retiring he went to live with his son, who is superintendent of this division of the Croton aqueduct.

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MANY CHRISTMAS PARTIES

MRS. LOUIS T. HOYT GIVES A LARGE DINNER AT SHERRY'S

Mrs. Abram S. Hewitt Entertains Relatives and Friends in Her Private Theatre Mrs. Edward R. Hewitt's Children Seen in a Little Broadway Play

Christmas festivities were in order yesterday. Mrs. Louis T. Hoyt gave her customary large dinner at Sherry's. Mrs. Abram S. Hewitt entertained a large clan of relatives and friends last night at an entertainment the chief feature of which was an exhibition of the moving pictures in color of King George, and Queen Mary's coronation last summer.

It took place in the private theatre with which Mrs. Hewitt is home on West 110th avenue, and was attended by a number of amateur dramatic performances have successfully been given. In the afternoon Mrs. Edward R. Hewitt had a children's party at her house in Gramercy Square, in the course of which a play in rhyme composed by herself and performed by her children and some of their young friends furnished much amusement. It was entitled "Time and Opportunity" and was witnessed by a number of grownup people, mostly relatives of Mrs. Hewitt and of the small guests.

Several dances are scheduled for tonight, among them that of Mrs. Schuyler Warren for her daughter, Miss Hope Warren at Sherry's. Mrs. Eugene Phillips also gives a small dance to-night at Sherry's for her debutante daughter, Miss Eugene Phillips. It will be preceded by a theatrical.

Mrs. Joel Fisher likewise has a dinner dance this evening for her daughter, Miss Viva Fisher, and Mrs. Henry W. Thornell has out invitations for a theatre party to be followed by a small dance for Miss Eleanor Prentice. In the afternoon Mrs. Clarence Bull gives a tea for her daughters, Constance and Beatrice, at her house in East Sixty-seventh street.

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