

AT THE LOCAL PLAYHOUSES

FRITZI SCHEFF IN NEW OPERA

"Mlle. Modiste" Presented at the Columbia.

THE PRESIDENT ATTENDS

Largest Audience of Season Shows Applause on Prima Donna and Composer.

No more auspicious introduction of a new offering could possibly be imagined than that which was given to "Mlle. Modiste," the comic opera composed by Victor Herbert for Fritzi Scheff, at the Columbia, last night. House packed from pit to gallery; audience given over to constant and most demonstrative enthusiasm; the President of the United States and other high dignitaries of the Government interested spectators; composer and librettist both present and honored with the star in most signal manner—these were the distinguishing features of one of the most successful first nights that Washington can record.

The orchestra was about to conclude the overture when the President and Mrs. Roosevelt, accompanied by Secretary of State Root, and Associate Justice and Mrs. Holmes, entered the box. Immediately there broke forth a storm of handclapping and hearty acclaim, to which Mr. Roosevelt repeatedly bowed his acknowledgments. This scene was repeated and more strongly accentuated when, just before the beginning of the second act, Mr. Herbert appeared in the conductor's seat, and led the orchestra as it played "The Star-Spangled Banner," in compliment to the Chief of the Nation.

Real Comic Opera. "Mlle. Modiste" gives a new reason for the confident expectation that real comic opera will yet become a regular American product. It is a most admirable addition to the comparatively few genuine native works of this character. There is in it tuneful music of much merit, especially in the first act, both for principals and chorus, some of it so catchy as to be seized upon immediately by the audience.

Mr. Herbert is to be credited with a distinctly praiseworthy achievement, and will no doubt be encouraged thereby to cultivate this most fruitful field for capable American composers. Mr. Blossom's libretto and lyrics show marked advancement, and he was fully entitled to share, as he did, in the honors that were showered so liberally on both.

Fritzi Scheff can lay claim to a pronounced personal triumph. To few stars has such a reception been accorded as to her upon her first appearance on the scene. It was several minutes before she could proceed with the business of her part and at every proper moment these marks of popular favor were made evident. Curtain call followed curtain call, nor would the audience be satisfied until the prima donna as well as composer and librettist had made the inevitable speech.

The role fits Miss Scheff like a glove. Mr. Herbert has fully gauged the almost unlimited possibilities of her voice, which is singularly brilliant in the middle and higher registers. Her singing is a positive delight, so free from all meretricious efforts, and her coloratura shows not only the exquisite purity of the voice but the perfect training of the grand opera artist.

Her acting is all that could be desired, and her dainty figure and vivacious manner stamp her as the ideal comic opera prima donna.

Good Supporting Company. The supporting company is well balanced in its chief elements. Although there are no voices of exceptional qual-

ity, they at least do not offend the ear. In the female contingent Miss Blanche Morrison, Miss Louise LeBaron and Miss Bertha Holly deserve special mention. William Pruette, native of Washington and an established opera favorite, Walter Percival, the leading tenor, Lec Mars and A. Kierman, excellent in topical songs, and Howard Chambers have the largest share in the solo singing among the men.

An altogether refreshing impersonation was the American millionaire of Claude Billingswater. The chorus sang remarkably well and the opera was most capably directed by John Lund. There was some clever dancing by Miss Ida Mora and a "pony" ballet. Charles Dillingham is entitled to unqualified praise for the lavishness with which he has equipped his offering. Nothing more elegant than the costumes worn by the chorus has been seen in Washington, and the scenery is all that an audience has a right to expect in a first-class performance.

LAFAYETTE

Billy B. Van the Whole Show in "The Errand Boy."

Fat people should avoid the Lafayette this week, for the initial performance of Billy B. Van, in "The Errand Boy," last night, caused a real peal of laughter for over two hours. Billy Van, as was to have been expected, was very nearly the whole show, though his work was well supplemented by a pretty, but not very tenuous chorus.

Billy, as Patsy Bolivar, is engaged as a general utility man for a stranded circus company. He is the only one in the village who finds the "angel" in the village grocerman, who also owns the grocer's store, and who is the daughter of a large number of bankers who are attending the convention now in session here.

"The Errand Boy" will be a popular attraction this week. For Mr. Van has a grotesque mannerisms and queer grimaces that are closely akin to the comedy of Jefferson de Angelis, who entertained the Washingtonians for over 300 performances of "Fantana," the work of Clem Bevins, as the sheriff, of Miss Florence Brooks, as Jerusha Pickens, who objects to theatricals, and of Miss Rose Beaumont, as Gloriana, was appreciated by the audience.

Among the repeatedly encored songs of the evening were "Say, Say," by Mr. Van and chorus; "You Won't Do Any Business if You've Got a Beard," by Miss Beaumont and company; and "Strolling," by Misses Edith Hart and Florine Sweetman, Frank C. Evans and Alf. C. Pierce.

LYCEUM.

Talented comedians and pretty show girls are in force with "The Cherry Blossoms" at the Lyceum. Laughter and applause abounded at the two performances given yesterday.

A clever burlesque, "The Wrong Count Tabasco," a mixture of fun, music and well-gowned femininity, serves as the curtain raiser.

In the olio are Harry Woods, parody singer; Mr. and Mrs. Evans, in sketch; Carlyle and Perry, singers and dancers; Manhasset Comedy Four, and H. V. Fitzgerald, in lighting change. "Quarrelsome Neighbors," much above the average of such burlesques, concluded the entertainment.

CRANE SEEN AGAIN IN TYPICAL PART

Captivated His Audience in "An American Lord."

BIG CROWD AT NATIONAL

Play a Good Vehicle for Sterling Actor in Role of Bluff, Honest Yankee.

A big audience, full of enthusiasm, greeted William H. Crane last night at the National in his play "An American Lord," by Charles T. Dazey and George H. Broadhurst. Mr. Crane was repeatedly called before the curtain and was given in every way a reception indicative of the high esteem in which he is held by American theatergoers.

In his new play, he is given every opportunity possible to display his peculiar gifts as a humorist and impersonator of the bluff, straightforward American citizen. Indeed, he is on the stage practically throughout for the purpose of showing the English how an estate should be run in an up-to-date American way. In order to do this, he refuses a nomination for Congress.

Great Crane Vehicle.

After he gets to England his heart falls him and he decides to return to America. In the meantime, however, he has become engaged to an Irish widow and his children have arranged to marry English people.

The play, which takes in close logical construction, is a great vehicle for the Crane character. He is the good, spontaneous, resourceful American, full of wit and proverb, showing that he is true blue at bottom. In the part Mr. Crane keeps his audience laughing. His facial expressions are unpassed, and his quaint resignation to the inevitable when he finds certain things against him is winning in the extreme.

Comedy Throughout.

Altogether, this is a role in which Mr. Crane's friends like to see him. It gives him full sweep for his comedy gifts, and this, apparently, is what his admirers want. In what his admirers want, this new play is a Crane part, with a few others thrown in to make up the action and Mr. Crane nobly acquits himself of his task of making the performance a spontaneous success.

Miss H. da Spong, as the Irish widow, with a slight but charming brogue, did excellent work, supporting Mr. Crane's comedy in finished and breezy fashion. Miss Rosalind Coghlan was also good as Alice Breuster.

Blakemore Good.

Harry Blakemore made a distinctly favorable impression in his impersonation of Scott, a colored servant, giving the character life and reality.

Frederick Tiden was effective as the Hon. Richard Westbrooke. Two characters, which brought out much fun, were Before-the-draw Pete and Texas, two typical Western cowboys, whose bewilderment at the swell ball in Sussex, England, was perfect. The parts were played by Elmer Grandin and Emmet Whitney.

Messrs. Dazey and Broadhurst, the authors of the play, had a box. Others in the audience were Dr. and Mrs. McDonald, Lieut. and Mrs. Downs Wilson, U. S. N., and Mr. and Mrs. Craigen.

Real Love Is on Wane, Declares Iconoclast

Dr. Forbes Winslow, Brain Specialist, Says That Sentiment Is Giving Way Before Civilization—Matrimonial Matters Are Bygone.

Is love passing away as an institution? Has sentiment given way before civilization? Is the passion that has inspired poets and played havoc with the history of the world becoming obsolete like chivalry, and religious fanaticism, and alchemy?

Dr. Forbes Winslow, the eminent brain specialist, says it is, and in proof of his assertion cites the fact that persons do not now go insane because of love. This iconoclast further says: "I do not really think, except in cases of silly attachment between boys and girls that there is much real love now a days."

CHASE'S.

Mysterious Zancigs Puzzle Large Audience by Their Clever Act.

The Mysterious Zancigs head an attractive offering of eight acts at Chase's this week. The vocal and oratorical distributor of peace, scored heavily in his monologue act. He sang several catchy songs that are new to Chase's clientele. "The Going Some" was the best in his collection.

Eddie Leonard, the former minstrel, and the Sharpe Brothers, in an old-time plantation scene entitled "In Dixie Land," is one of the best numbers on the programme. The Rice Family, in a musical act, Taylor Holmes in imitation of the Five Piroscos, jugglers, Herman's cat and dog pantomime, and Automobile No. 13 on the viagraph played very well. The dramatic scenes were well received by an unusually large audience last night.

ACADEMY.

"A Rocky Road to Dublin" Finds an Appreciative Audience.

"A Rocky Road to Dublin," a play abounding in the conventionalities of Irish stage life interspersed with Irish melodies love and music, is the offering at the Academy this week. The play is free from the usual rough and tumble business, and, with just enough of comedy, was highly appreciated by a large audience last night.

Barney Gilmore, as Robert Daley, with his rich Irish brogue and off-handed manner, was roundly applauded at the end of each act. Mitta Shirley, as Bernadine Ferguson, his sweetheart, was pleasing to the eye and in her acting as well. Frank Lavaine as William Masterson, American mine operator and mayor of Walla Walla; Will Lang as Phillip Ferguson, the heroine's wayward brother, and George Hassell, a London promoter; John D. Griffin, a jaunty car driver; Isis Maynard as Mrs. Henry Clifford, from Boston; and Virginia Munly as Nellie Core played their respective roles with marked effect.

Emily Green as Mollie Moran, and Patrick Touhey as Patsy Burk furnished the droll features of the performance.

VIOLA ALLEN'S SUCCESS IN "THE TOAST OF THE TOWN"

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 10.—Viola Allen was given a great ovation at the Broad Street Theater last night when

DUEL TO THE DEATH.

BOWLING GREEN, Ky., Oct. 10.—Standing at the open grave of their uncle, with 300 mourners watching, John Phelps and John Honaker, cousins, fought a duel with pistols in which Phelps was instantly killed and Honaker fatally wounded. The duel occurred over the division of the estate.

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