In the Mimic World.

Prior to witnessing De Koven & Smith's latest opera, "Maid Marian," the writer made so bold as to say that they had never duplicated their "Robin Hood," that is—equalled it in point of excellence. A contemplation of "Maid Marian" as presented by the Bostonians Friday night and last night at the Metropolitan but confirms that assertion.

When the composer and librettist got their heads together over "Robin Hood" some felicitious genius must have hovered over them, for they produced a masterpiece of light romantic opera that age cannot wither nor custom stale. The score is one succession of musical gems, fashioned in a light and breezy vein to be sure, but ever bright and sparkling. The story unfolds itself in an easy, simple fashion, the dialogue is direct and pointed, and the comedy invariably subordinated to the main theme.

The music of "Robin Hood" possesses a distinct character. It is redolent of the open air, free, rollicking and spontaneous. One of its captivating characteristics consists in the tempos of the various solos and concerted numbers. They may be said to give the opera its spirit, its life. There is a certain similarity, a certain trait in the music that stamps it as one complete work from the pen of one composer, just for instance as one passage from Dickens bears kinship to another, without in any sense borrowing from it.

But, strange to say, this parallel does not apply to any of De Koven's musical creations outside of "Robin Hood." For example, take his opera, "The Knickerbockers," which the Bostonians exploited nearly ten years ago. In the first place there is scarcely a bar in that work which suggests the composer of "Robin Hood," nor indeed does the music itself possess any distinct individual color.

How different in this respect the works of such operatic composers as the late Sir Arthur Sullivan, the late Planquette of "Chimes of Normandy" fame, Offenbach, Strauss, Audran and a host of others? Every one of Sullivan's operas bears the distinct impress of the composer's genius—the mark of its parent, the family resemblance noticeable in brothers and sisters, however faint it may be.

What is true of De Koven's numerous creations following "Robin Hood" is equally true of his latest child, "Maid Marian." Although it contains many charming ensemble numbers, bearing evidence of musicianly skill, not a trace of the De Koven who gave us "Robin Hood" is apparent throughout this or any other of his creations.

When "Robin Hood" was first produced, and for some time thereafter, the composer was freely and frequently accused of plagiarism. And, indeed, many of the arias, glees and madrigals had a startlingly familiar sound. It was said his milkmaids' chorus was merely a chorus from "Faust," with the tempo changed.

But then Sullivan was accused of stealing some of the delightful music of "Pinafore," "Patience" and "The Pirates," but now his comic operas have become classics in their realm, and nobody thinks of Sullivan but as a creator of delicious music.

But to return to De Koven and "Maid Marian." This opera just as surely lacks distinction and atmosphere as "Robin Hood" possesses them. It will not live. It is not a spontaneous effort. Imagine what would have become of it, if, to speak bluntly, it stood on its own bottom, instead of harking back to its ancestor.

Its story possesses none of the romantic interest of "Robin Hood." The removal of the scene of action from merry England's cool forests and shady nooks to the burning desert of the Orient is a fatal violation of the unity of place. It fairly shrivels up the green leaves and blasts the wholesome atmosphere of Sherwood forest, which imparts color and life to "Robin Hood."

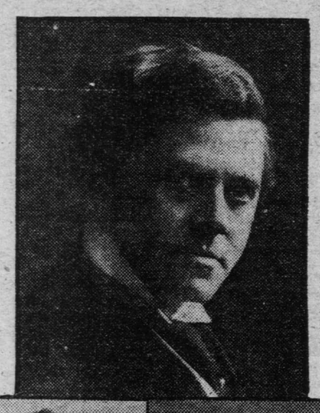
Neither are the characters of "Maid Marian" drawn so close to nature. They are rather emasculated in the second edition of Robin Hood's merry outlaws. The Sheriff of Nottingham is but a faint reflection of the real sheriff, whose egotism is displayed through the medium of spontaneous speeches, rather than smart, up-to-date gags.

Nothing to approach the Tinkers' chorus brightens "Maid Marian," and as for the "Brown October Ale" song, the cross-bow song, the churning trio, St. Swithin's chimes and the exquisite male sextette in the second act, can they begin to be matched in this prolongation of "Robin Hood?"

It is noteworthy that "Robin Hood" affords all the principal singers splendid opportunities to display their vocal accomplishments, notably, aside from Maid Marian herself in her two solos, Alan-a-Dale, Little John and Will Scarlet.

The music that fills and lingers in the ear, long after it has ceased sounding in the theater, is the kind that makes an opera immortal, even if it be but a comic opera.

Robin Hood and his band, Maid Marian and the Sheriff of Nottingham, and Friar Tuck, are out of their element in the holy land. They belong in Sherwood forest. —Fred G. Hunt.



DAVID WARFIELD.

DALLAS TYNER.

SADIE MINER.

Principals in "The Auctioneer" at the Metropolitan this Week

GEO. W. WALKER

Of Williams and Walker, at The Grand, "In Dohomey."

"THE AUCTIONEER" AT THE MET.

David Warfield Will Make His First Appearance in St. Paul.

David Warfield will make his first appearance in St. Paul as a star at the Metropolitan tonight. Early in September of 1901 he began his long engagement at the Bijou theater in New York city, and it is a well known fact that during his entire run of four months, the "housefull" sign was upon the sidewalk at every night performance and at many of the matinees. He was the conspicuous success of that season in the metropolis, and at the close of his run his reputation had extended to every part of the land and he had become firmly established as one of the leading stars in this country. His New York success was duplicated in the larger cities when he went on the road and this year praise and prosperity of the most gratifying kind have followed in his wake.

To David Belasco we are indebted for the opportunity of seeing Warfield at the head of his own organization, and former experience with this capable author-manager have taught us to expect something that shall be at least unique in character and careful and complete in the matter of stage detail.

In the character of Simon Levi, the East side auctioneer, the star has an excellent vehicle to display his versatile gifts. Simon Levi is an eccentric Hebrew, with the keenest desire to get the best of a bargain and with a heart which seeks to distribute happiness. Levi owns an auction store on the East side in New York city, where he acquires a small fortune and moves with his family to a new home on Lexington avenue. Here he gives a brilliant reception to celebrate the engagement of his adopted daughter Helga, and the son of his old friend, Mrs. Eagen.

When "the only Levi," as the ex-auctioneer has always been known, comes into his fortune, his first thought is of his adopted child and her happiness. Knowing her to be in love with Richard Eagen, and realizing that only the boy's small income prevented their marriage, he buys for him an interest in a financial firm to be known as Groode & Eagen. The remainder of his fortune Levi invests in the stock of the Prutania Trust company, and it is not until he is giving the party at his uptown home that the stocks are discovered to be bogus. Young Eagen is innocent of wrong in the matter, but through his partner, Groode, who, on the advice of a rascally politician named Callahan, goes into hiding, has to bear the brunt of the charge.

During the reception a detective comes to Levi's house to cause the young man's arrest. For a time Levi is stunned; but, unwilling to betray his misfortune to the guests, he laughs with them while his heart is wrung with anguish over the calamity that will so affect those he loves. He is reduced to poverty by the fraud that has been practiced on him and the final act shows Levi again upon the streets, where he earns his living by peddling trinkets from the same old basket with which he had first started in business years before. His misfortune, however, is only brief, and the curtain falls on his restored fortune and general happiness.

David Belasco has provided the most careful scenic equipment for "The Auctioneer." The scenes pictured will be Five Points, a Lexington avenue mansion, and the corner of West Twenty-third street and Sixth avenue. An excellent company has been chosen to support the star. The entire roster numbers more than fifty people. Of these the more important are Marie Bates, Maria Davis, Robert Fischer, Eugene Canfield, William Boag, Helena Phillips, Dallas Tyler, Stokes Sullivan, Sadie Miner, Harry Rogers, Charles Chappelle, Dorothy West Rogers, Rachel McCausland and others.

WALKER WHITESIDE.

Tragedian Will Present Shakespearean Repertoire at the Metropolitan.

Walker Whiteside, who for several years has been creditably identified with the legitimate drama, will present a Shapespearean repertoire at the Metropolitan during the latter half of the week.

On Thursday and Saturday evenings Mr. Whiteside will appear as Richard III.; Friday night he will impersonate Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice," and Saturday afternoon "Hamlet" will be the bill with Mr. Whiteside in the role of the melancholy Dane.

Mr. Whiteside's portrayal of Hamlet is more or less familiar to local theater-goers, who recognize it as an extremely interesting and attractive impersonation. For Mr. Whiteside is the possessor of a graceful presence and a sonorous voice, which he uses effectively in the interpretation of Shakespeare's blank verse.

Special interest attaches to his assumption of the role of the "crookback," Richard, as he is making a special production of "Richard III." Mr. Whiteside's impersonation of Richard has met with favor in other cities, whose critics have accorded it warm praise.

On Friday night Mr. Whiteside will essay Shylock, unquestionably one of Shakespeare's greatest creations. This impersonation has also been highly commended by the press and public of the larger cities.

A capable company is promised.

WILLIAMS AND WALKER.

Colored Comedians Will Be the Attraction at the Grand.

The colored comedians, Williams and Walker, in their latest production called "In Dahomey," under the direction of Hurtig & Seamon, will open a week's engagement at the Grand opera house with a performance tonight.

The comedians have a play this season that has been packing the theaters in which they have appeared, so it is said. It is a musical comedy in three acts and the company is reported to be the best they have ever had. Williams and Walker are without doubt the funniest colored comedians on the stage today. The staging of the piece was one of their principal aims after the company was selected, and they have succeeded, according to all accounts, in having one of the finest costumed productions now on the road. The music, which is new, is by Will Marion Cook, the book was written by Jesse Shipp, and the lyrics by Paul Laurence Dunbar, the colored poet. There are fifty people in the company, including a chorus of thirty-five girls.

Williams and Walker will introduce a number of new specialties, songs, dances and funny sayings. These two comedians are constantly writing new songs. They will be assisted by Lottie Williams, Ada Overton Walker, Fred Douglas, George Catlin and Jesse A. Shipp.

This is the first appearance in St. Paul in some years of this clever team, and their engagement promises to be one of the most successful of the season. It will be for one week with the usual Wednesday and Saturday matinees.

HIGH ROLLERS BURLESQUERS.

Entertainment Full of Variety Promised at the Star Theater.

High Rollers Burlesquers will be the attraction at the Star this week, with daily matinee, introducing funny comedians, eccentric dancers, sweet singers and twenty prettily costumed girls. The following entertainers will appear: The Musical Kleists, electrical comical black art act; Palfrey and Hilton, European comedy bicycle artists; Howe and Scott, Hebrew comedians; Franklin Sisters, songs and dances; Eva Mitchell, singer of coon songs, and the original living pictures; two burlesques, "A Runaway Girl" and "In the Heart of New York." A boxing contest will take place at every performance, together with a reproduction of all the big fights by the original female fighters.

COMING ATTRACTIONS.

Marcus R. Mayer's comedy company comes to the Metropolitan opera house for an engagement of four nights and a Wednesday matinee, beginning Sunday, Feb. 8. They will present Arthur W. Pinero's comedy that was so successfully played by the English comedian, John Hare, in London and New York, entitled "The Gay Lord Quex."

* * *

The distinguished English actor, Kyrle Bellew, has not been seen in St. Paul for a number of years. He comes to the Metropolitan for a brief engagement of three nights and a matinee, beginning Feb. 12. He will present "A Gentleman From France," with the original New York cast and production.

* * *

Horace Lewis will be seen at the Metropolitan opera house, Feb. 15, 16, 17 and 18, in Sol Smith Russell's greatest success, "A Poor Relation."

* * *

George W. Lederer's big musical comedy, "Sally in Our Alley," with seventy-five people, will be seen at the Metropolitan opera house Feb. 19, 20 and 21. "Sally in Our Alley" is considered one of the biggest successes that Mr. Lederer has ever had.

* * *

The popular comedian, Frank Daniels, with his big musical comedy company, will appear for a brief engagement at the Metropolitan opera house the latter part of February, presenting for the first time in this city his latest success, "Miss Simplicity."

* * *

A pastoral play entitled "Our Minister," written by Denman Thompson and George W. Ryer, will make its initial appearance at the Metropolitan opera house, this city, the first four days of March.

* * *

Mr. Joseph Murphy, the Irish character comedian, in "Kerry Gow" and "Shaun Rhue," will be the attraction at the Grand opera house following the engagement of Williams and Walker. Mr. Murphy is supported by actors who have for years played the roles assigned to them and have attained a corresponding degree of efficiency.

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"At the Old Cross Roads," presented by Arthur C. Alston's company, is announced for early appearance at the Grand.

* * *

The Orpheum Show will be seen at the Grand opera house the week of Feb. 15. Director Beck has assembled for the Orpheum Show this season an array of talent which is said to surpass in its excellence and variety any of his previous offerings. McIntyre & Heath are the headliners and are presenting a new sketch entitled "The Man From Montana."

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The Swedish dialect play, "Yon Yonson," is underlined for appearance at the Grand shortly.

* * *

Clyde Fitch's clever play, "Lover's Lane," comes to the Grand in the near future, presented by a capable company with all the original scenery and effects.

* * *

James A. Herne's "Hearts of Oak" will be seen at the Grand in March.

DRAMATIC GOSSIP.

"Foxy Grandpa," which has been one of the big money-makers of the season, will continue on the road next year without Joseph Hart and Carrie de Mar, who are to star in a serial—not cereal—comedy yclept "Sunny Jim."

The Hanlons have no interest in the present production of "La Voyage en Suisse." The piece is now owned, managed and produced by the Byrne Brothers. The new "Superba" is the only production on the road in which the Hanlon Brothers have an interest.

Edward Milton Royle has arranged for a production of "Friends" in London this spring. A performance of the play for a representative of a London manager was given in Asbury Park, N. J., Jan. 16. Mr. Royle is making preparations for the production of his new play, "My Wife's Husband."

Louis James and Fred Warde began their tour in Wagenhals and Kemper's spectacular production of "The Tempest," Sept. 1, and without exception have made money every week. It is said that Wagenhals and Kemper added $30,000 to their bank account in twenty weeks. This is a pretty good showing for old Bill Shakespeare.

Marshall P. Wilder's annual appearance in vaudeville is invariably heralded by a set of stories anent his humorous experiences in various parts of the world. In Boston last week, where the story teller appeared, he related an incident of a visit he once paid to the home of Adelina Patti in Wales.

The great singer has a craze for parrots, and has about twenty of the talkative birds in her house. She is very proud of their ability and never fails to show her visitors how well they can talk. Wilder, who does not understand French any better than the average American, was brought in to see the birds, and Patti immediately began asking them questions in French, which they repeated fluently.

"Can you understand every word they say?" asked the enthusiastic Patti.

"Indeed, madam," answered the humorist, soberly, "I understand them quite as well as I do you."

Denials continue to come in from David Belasco that he is to have anything to do with the tour of Lillian Russell as a comic opera star, and in connection with this there is a story current on the Rialto as to what put an end to the negotiations between them. According to this gossip, Miss Russell had intrusted the purchase of an opera to an intimate friend who is much more successful as a financier than as a theatrical manager. Miss Russell declared herself very much in favor of "Mme. Sans-Gene," and the friend was commissioned to buy it for her. Just at this point his financial instincts got the better of him, and he began to beat down the owners to what he thought was a proper price. They met him more than half way, in fact, only a matter of $500 kept them apart. Miss Russell's friend would not yield, and while he was waiting a representative of Miss Alice Nielson stepped in and bought the opera. Nobody knows what the fair Lillian said about it, but Belasco's position was made so plain that Miss Russell had to cast around for a new manager.

All sorts of promises have been made regarding prospective dramatic "adaptations" of Rudyard Kipling's novels, but until now there had seemed little chance of any being seen on the stage. Various dramatists have announced an intention of trying their hands on "The Story of the Gadsbys," "Under the Deodars," and even "The Jungle Book" has been marked for dramatization as a children's play.

The first assurance that anything definite had been accomplished in this direction, however, is the announcement by Forbes Robertson, who is now giving a revival of "Othello," that he has begun rehearsals of "The Light That Failed," with which he means to follow his present production. The version of the novel which Robertson intends to use is in a prologue and three acts, and Gertrude Elliott (Mrs. Robertson), the American girl who now is playing Desdemona to her husband's Othello, will have the part of the heroine, Maisie.

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The Cast Includes Lawrence Evart, William Clifford, Herbert E. Sears, Miss Josephine Morse, Miss Kathryn Curtiss Keyes and

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All Incidental Music by James C. McCabe, of New York, and Under His Personal Direction. Reservations May Be Made by Mail or Telephone.

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