

The Mimic World.

That there are Shakespearean plays unsusceptible of effective representation upon the stage must be apparent to any fond reader of them.

These two plays will serve as demonstrations of the foregoing assertion for the reason that both have been produced on the local stage within the last two or three years.

To the devotee of Shakespeare in the admirably able production of "The Tempest," witnessed during the first half of the week at the Metropolitan.

That it was inadequate in comparison with the more conspicuous inspired by the contemplation of its sublime poetry in the closer no student can deny.

That it did not satisfy the craving of the habitual theatergoer for motive and action was only too evident.

Yet this was not the fault of the players, nor of the managers who have staged it so lavishly.

It is the supernatural quality of this poetic drama that renders its action translation to the material stage, and its interpretation by flesh and blood actors, impossible, save at the sacrifice of its daintest flights of fancy and its divine poetry.

When we read the passages allotted to the fairy Ariel, we can see the spirit with the mind's eye. So, too, we behold without an effort the marbled hideous Caliban, and Prospero, the dignified, benevolent enchanter of the isle.

But their flesh and blood embodiments upon the stage of a theater are bound, no matter how sympathetically and reverently portrayed, to destroy the illusion.

For while Prospero and Caliban are human beings, they represent certain spiritual conceptions best conceived by the reader of the play.

The lover of Shakespeare, while all sympathetic with every effort to put his plays before those who do not read him, is of necessity more exacting.

He is a profferer in the master's behalf—eager to see him in his moments of leisure.

But to return to this production of "The Tempest." Two actors who adorn the American stage are conspicuously identified with it—Louis James and Frederick Warde.

Both have played many parts created by the master dramatist, and played them well. I doubt if there is an actor upon our stage who can so completely personify the character of Oberon as Mr. James.

Mr. Warde is not blessed with such a glorious voice as his confrere; but his portrayal of Mark Antony is highly commendable, and intense, illuminated as it is by complete comprehension of the man "that Shakespeare drew."

These two actors can be relied upon to impart the genuine Shakespearean flavor to any of the master's creations they essay, which is more than can be said of some actors whose high ambitions to bring the poet down to date.

But their efforts in "The Tempest" are well nigh futile, as would be those of any other actors. Prospero cannot be embodied so as to fill the physical eye. Caliban is not a creature to be seen. He must be imagined.

What thoughtful critics rich, sonorous tones and accurate emphasis imparted full meaning to every syllable, the visible object he presented distracted attention from the speaker and his speech. You saw those monstrous ears and rolling eyes, that tortuous and leer and leering countenance, and you wished you had a net.

Incidentally Mr. James might have made Caliban more baleful, and therefore more repulsive.

In spite of all the dignity that Mr. Warde gave to Prospero, reading the lines impressively as he did, the atmosphere that enveloped the lord of the isle was absent. Prospero waved his staff and the lights went down. He waved it again and they shot up. Then he walked off the stage.

Prospero is not what the actor calls a "fat part," even though he is a potent ruler, with the elements at his command.

Stage mechanism, advanced and ingenious as it is, actors, though gifted they may be, cannot reflect the fanciful flights of a genius like Shakespeare.

But Messrs. James and Warde, and their managers merit admiration for their most worthy effort in such an inspiring field.

—Fred G. Hunt.

THE METROPOLITAN.

An attraction that is said to combine woman and song in the most felicitous manner is scheduled to furnish diversion at the Metropolitan during all of the present week, beginning tomorrow night. In comprises the inimitable comedienne and lovely chanteuse, Anna Held, and her company of handsome women and comedians who will present "The Little Duchess."

F. Ziegfeld Jr.'s presentation of "The Little Duchess," in which Miss Held is the most prominent feature, comes here practically as it was presented during its long engagement at the Casino in New York. In addition to this, local amusement lovers may look forward with confidence to the performance of the little French artist the fullest measure of pliancy of manner and excellence of impersonation.

"The Little Duchess" is the product of Reginald de Koven and Harry B. Smith, and tells a story of a young woman, who, while ostensibly, assumes the patent of nobility in order that she may win the affections of an officer. In a short time, however, the impostor falls in love with a man she has intended to marry, and she declares her true position. The relation of this plot does not give the slightest idea of the many complications and numerous subplots, but nor is there any possibility of giving a correct idea of them in cold type. It is sufficient to say that unlimited opportunities are afforded Miss Held for the display of the talents already mentioned, and that there is no lack of material to be interpreted by the several clever comedians of the supporting company.

The score is described as being of a most whistling order. Miss Held has no fewer than five solos. The songs in the singing of which the comedienne is assisted by thirteen handsomely dressed young women, has captured every audience, as "Betsey Brown," "Chloe," "Violets," "The Maiden with the Dreamy Eyes" and "Pretty Molly Shift."

At the finale of the first act the entire chorus and principals use megaphones, and, of course, the comedians—of whom Miss Held has a number—others with ludicrous effect. In addition there is a brass band upon the stage. Miss Held, in the full glare of the limelight, stands in front of a brilliantly illuminated shell, behind the chorus girls in a silk-ribbon leash, and the chorus of Miss Held's principal song can be imagined to be delivered with excellent effect.

It is promised that Miss Held will bring to the city a beauty show beyond compare, and will be supported by a company of clever players, including such performers as Joseph W. Herbert, just seen in San Francisco as the principal comedian with Alice Nelson; George W. Marion, one of the ablest stage directors of musical comedy in the country; Knox Wilson, recently with the "Burgomaster," playing the title role; Frank Rushworth, leading tenor of the "Storks" company until engaged by Miss Held; Louis Royce, remembered for his good work with Frank Daniels for two or three seasons;

and the famous star, Franz Ebert, of the original Lilliputians, not to mention the big chorus of male and female voices, and particularly the "sadie girls," who are said to be a feature of this Held production, the like of which, in many respects, it is promised, has not been seen on the local stage.

THE GRAND.

The revival this season of James A. Herne's famous domestic play, "Hearts of Oak," which will be presented at the Grand, and which has met with the most generous support at the hands of the playing public. The engagement opens tonight.

"Hearts of Oak" is one of the early plays written by James A. Herne, and its beautiful atmosphere of domestic life in New England appeals to the hearts of old and young alike. There is nothing "unreal" in "Hearts of Oak," but on the contrary, not a single line or situation is exaggerated. The men, women and children figuring in the Herne plays are types of real and natural human beings. There is no ranting or ranting and nothing is far-fetched. In evolving "Hearts of Oak," the author made a careful study of the folk who dwell on the rugged shores of New England. He watched their daily doings, and then gave the world his pen pictures of life, presenting the same with a careful attention to detail that has made the Herne productions famous. In witnessing either "Hearts of Oak" or "Shore Acres," the entire gamut of the spectator's emotions is skillfully played upon. One laughs at the joy of the stage characters and weeps with their sorrows.

Of "Hearts of Oak" it may be said that it was the first of the modern style of realistic natural dramas, and was one of the first in which repressed acting, so much in vogue now, was introduced. It marked an epoch in the American drama, and at the period when it was produced, was undoubtedly ahead of the times. Perhaps more in the past, it was the first of the modern originality of the story lay its chief charm and its success with the public. James A. Herne, the author of "Hearts of Oak," "Shore Acres" and other kindred plays, occupies a unique position in connection with the American drama. It fell to his lot to fight the originality of the story lay its chief charm and its success with the public.

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strength of the Castle Square company, as now constituted, provides for three casts of equal merit for each of the evenings and the Wednesday matinee. The liberal policy of the Castle Square management insures the public against hearing performances given by singers with worn and hoarse voices. The repertoire which has been arranged for the engagement in the Twin Cities includes eight of the most popular operas, on example each of Gounod, Flotow, Bizet and Balfe, and two each of Verdi and Wagner.

The first of the Verdi operas to be presented will be "Il Trovatore," which will be the opening opera of the engagement in Minneapolis, and which will be repeated on Thursday and Saturday evenings and the Wednesday matinee; the Gounod opera will be "Faust," which will also be presented during the first week of the engagement and will be sung on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday evenings, and at the Saturday matinee.

For the second week, beginning March 23, which will be played in St. Paul, Wagner and Balfe will be represented with compositions. The Wagner opera will be "Lohengrin" and the Balfe opera will be "The Bohemian Girl." They will be presented in the order named, and in the same arrangement of evenings and matinees as the first week's operas.

The last week of the engagement in Minneapolis is to be given up to Bizet and Wagner. The composition of the former will be "Carmen" and the Wagner opera is to be "Tannhauser," and they will be presented in the same order as the other operas.

For the final week of the engagement back to St. Paul, Verdi and Flotow will be represented. The Verdi opera is to be his spectacular "Aida" and the Flotow opera, "Martha." With so varied a repertoire the organization will be heard to exceptional advantage and the casts will include the full strength of the company.

The company give two sacred concerts during the engagement. The first will be given in Minneapolis on the second Sunday of the engagement, at which will be sung in addition to a very full concert programme, the "Stabat Mater" of Rossini. The second concert will be given on the second Sunday of the engagement of the company in St. Paul, at which the principal number on the programme is to be the favorite St. Cecilia mass of Gounod, with a miscellaneous programme, which is quite different from that of the preceding Sunday. These concerts enlist the full strength of the entire company, and in fact will be the only performances at which all the principals as well as the chorus and orchestra take part.

The sale of seats for the first week according to the plans mapped out for her by Manager Dillingham, she will appear in the new Clyde Fitch play, entitled, "Her Own Way."

Manager Augustus Pittou is writing a new romantic Irish drama for Chauncey Olcott. It will be given its first production in this city next fall at the new Majestic theater.

"The Darling of the Gods," in which Blanche Bates appears at Belasco's, passed its 100th performance last week and goes on with unabated popularity.

Klaw & Erlanger have secured from George V. Hobart the stage rights to his series of humorous books, called "John Henry," which he will dramatize in collaboration with Edward E. Rose. These will be given at the new theatre under the direction of Klaw & Erlanger, at Daly's theater the latter part of May.

Oiga Nethersole is now touring England in "Sapho." While in Paris recently, on her way from Biarritz, where she had been spending a holiday, she purchased from Jean Richepin the rights to his play, "Le Masque," and has placed it in the hands of Mrs. Craigie (John Oliver Hobbes) for translation and adaptation.

Maude Adams, who has been spending the winter in caring for her health, will soon go to Europe for a stay that will last at least through the summer. Although going for rest and recreation primarily, she will, it is said, keep in close touch with J.M. Barrie, who is writing the new play in which it is expected she will return to the stage next season.

On April 11, the birthday of Shakespeare, the Lyceum theater of London, the playhouse so long identified with the work of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, will be put up at auction along with its site