

THE HOLIDAY PLAY BILLS.

COMIC OPERA, FARCE COMEDY, MINSTRELSY, AND MELODRAMA.

These Are What The Local Theatres Offer This Week—"Poor Jonathan," a New Departure in Comic Opera, at Albaugh's, and the Irresistible "Parlor Match" at the National—Reviews and Notes.

It was a lively aggregation of big folks and little folks that gave a show at Albaugh's Grand Opera House last week, but the little folks were not young folks in the general acceptance of the term. They were what are known as "The Lilliputians," and they took the leading parts in the performance. In the way of novelty there has been nothing here for a long time that so successfully filled the bill, and, despite the fact that the German language unanimously carried the play, there was that about the acting of these clever little people that showed ability of no mean order. "The Pupil in Magic" is the name of the odd mixture of music, dialogue, and ballet which they presented, and taking it all in all the entertainment afforded much enjoyment. The midlets were all good, but the particular stars among them were Miss Groener and Mr. Franz Ebert. The latter as *Puck* afforded much merriment by his tricky antics. The ballet was large and the scenery and effects were beautiful.

Reminiscences and traditions of the stage oftentimes tell of the exquisite productions of old English comedy by the masters of the histrionic art in the past, but it would be difficult indeed for even the critical mind of the present advanced civilization to conjure its imagination into a conception of a more nearly perfect performance than was witnessed at the National Theatre last week, where the Jefferson-Florence Company held the boards. How refreshing! To see this company is almost a translation into actual association with the characters assumed by its members. All of that feeling of artificiality on the part of the auditor is lost for the time being in the wonderful realism of the scenes and dialogue of the play. It is stage realism in the highest sense of the word—not the clap-trap realism of mechanical devices and bloodthirsty sensationalism, but the realism of true acting; the acmé of artistic achievement. Sheridan's charming comedy, "The Rivals," was the play presented during the fore part of the week, and "The Heir-at-Law" comprised the programme for the latter part, the house being well filled on every occasion. It would be difficult to imagine aught but a typical performance by a company comprising such artists as Joseph Jefferson, W. J. Florence, F. C. Bangs, Frederick Paulding, George Denham, Mrs. John Drew, and Miss Viola Allen. Each one is a star in a brilliant constellation, and to render the individual commendation deserved becomes as unnecessary as it would be to introduce them to a public which has so often before paid homage to their abundant genius.

"Poor Jonathan" at Albaugh's.

At Albaugh's this week we are to have the Casino's new opera, "Poor Jonathan," which has achieved a triumph wherever presented, and it will be given by Rudolph Aronson's Comic Opera Company, which is composed of



TOBIAS QUICKLY.

sterling artists. The story of the opera is interesting, and it is said to abound in bright lines and comedy situations. The music is by Carl Millöcker, composer of the "Beggar Student," and is full of jingling melodies, waltzes, marches, bravuras, ballads, ensembles, and catchy tunes. Nothing more charming than Miss Camille Darville's *Harriet*, it is said, has been seen in comic opera in many a day. She sings like a capable and experienced artist, and her acting is naive and graceful. The third act of "Poor Jonathan" introduces the West Point cadets, and their drilling calls for three or four encores nightly. Mr. Aronson's new march, "The National Guard," is played by the orchestra during this drill. "Poor Jonathan" is being performed with great success in several theatres in Europe and at the New York Casino, and its already assured triumph here will add another link to its triumphal chain. There will be a matinee Christmas Day and Saturday. The cast will include Camille Darville, Louise Elising, Eva Johns, J. H. Ryley, Henry Hallam, Max Lube, George Olmi, and Fred Solomon.

"After Dark" at the Bijou.

Boucault's celebrated play, "After Dark," will be given at Harris's Bijou Theatre this week with a wealth of scenic splendor. The production has met with approval wherever seen, and has already enjoyed the indorsement of Washington audiences. The play is a masterpiece of melodrama. The first act ends with the famous raid by the police on a London gambling-house, which is in the twinkling of an eye changed to what seems to be a very devout assemblage of Salvation Army people. In the second and third acts, both of which are very realistic pictures, the former of Old London and the latter of English country life, some excellent acting is done. The concert scene in the fourth act is a show in itself. It is in the finale to this act that the underground railway is shown, with the thrilling rescue by *Old Tom*, the hero, of a train which wreckers have tried to destroy. In the great river scene an immense tank of real water is used, into which *Old Tom* dashes to rescue the heroine from drowning. The strictest fidelity to local coloring is preserved. The situations are thrilling and the characters strongly and cleverly

drawn. The famous sparrers, Kelly and Murphy, appears in the concert-hall scene. Also, the grotesque athletes, Sherman and Morrissey. Usual matinees, with special Christmas performance.

New National Theatre.

Having undergone its annual rejuvenation, "A Parlor Match" will be seen all next week at the National. Evans and Hoey, whose characterization of the book agent and tramp are about the only things in the play that have not been changed by the evolution that takes place



each year, are still the principal attraction. Messrs. Evans and Hoey will present for the first time in this city the three marvelous English Sisters Levey, who have been meeting with such unbounded praise since their appearance in America. Each one of these ladies is over six feet high, and they are possessed of good voices. They appear in the second act in their specialties and are rapturously applauded until their stock of songs is exhausted. Mr. Hoey will be heard in his great topical song, "They're After Me." As sung by him it has no equal. The songs, music, dances, and specialties introduced are numerous, well chosen, and great successes.

Minstrelsy at Lincoln Hall.

In holiday times it is the duty of the solemn to be merry and the merry to be merrier. There are some people who find the joyous spirit of the season enough to produce this effect, but



the great majority of mankind need a little outside help. No better aid to jollity can be found than a first-rate minstrel entertainment, with its rollicking songs, its absurd dialogue, its jokes, its grotesque plantation scenes, and the clever work of the dancers and specialty artists. Such an entertainment, warranted to put the most morose in harmony with the spirit of the holiday season, will be given at Lincoln Hall this week by Cleveland's Famous Consolidated Minstrels. This is now regarded as one of the best, if not the very best minstrel troupe on the road, and it gives a great show. There will be matinees on Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Seats are on sale at Metzgerott's.

Agnes Huntington.

The great fame achieved by Miss Agnes Huntington during her engagement at the Prince of Wales Theatre, London, of over a year, during which time she sang the title rôle in the opera "Paul Jones" 346 consecutive times, has followed her to this country since her return with her own opera comique company of over seventy people. It is therefore no wonder that the engagement here of Miss Huntington and her company is looked forward to with a great deal of pleasurable anticipation by all lovers of beautiful music sung by a company of unexcelled artists. Miss Huntington is already a great favorite in this city and has a large social acquaintance here. The engagement here is at Lincoln Music Hall for one week, commencing Monday, Dec. 23, in Planquette's beautiful opera "Paul Jones." The sale of seats will begin Tuesday morning at Metzgerott's music store.

The Passion Play Illustrated.

Dr. O. D. Cheney, of Boston, who witnessed the wonderful Passion Play at Ober Ammergau last summer, will deliver at Masonic Hall, Monday and Tuesday evenings, December 29 and 30, a lecture illustrated with many beautiful lantern views, taken at the time, of the picturesque village itself, and especially of the wonderful tableaux of the whole history of the Passion. Both lecture and views have been highly commended by the critical press and public of Boston, and many of the clergy of the District have expressed their warm approval of Dr. Cheney's lecturing here and intention to be present. The play may never be performed again, and this opportunity of getting a vivid idea of its impressiveness should not be neglected.

"The Clemenceau Case" at Kernan's.

A version of the famous "Clemenceau Case," in three pretty tableaux, introducing a beautiful living model, is one of the features of the Sensational Boom Model Burlesque and Spectacular Company, which will open at Kernan's Theatre to-morrow night for one week only, including Christmas matinee. Another feature is the spectacular triumph which concludes the opening burlesque—the crowning of America's emblem. Besides many new and artistic features there is a grand olio, including specialties by Harry S. Van Auken and Fred S. La Van, Mulen and Dunn, Ruby Hart, Frank Goldie and Sallie St. Clair, Lillie May Hall, and Matthew and Bulger. The excellent entertainment concludes with a very pretty burlesque, entitled "Golden Locks; or, The Beautiful Princess," rich in scenic effects and spectacular features. Ladies' matinees Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, including Christmas matinee. Next week, Williams and Orr's Meteors.

Notes of the Stage.

Mrs. Leslie Carter is to add "Frou-Frou" to her repertory.

A London funny man says that the fearful destruction of the American forests is attributable

to the ever-increasing demand for sawdust for the great American ballet.

Lizzie Evans has a new war drama called "My Maryland."

Tommy Russell has retired from the stage and begun to go to school.

Myron W. Whitney sang in "The Messiah" at Philadelphia Friday night.

Dixey has been on the stage twenty-six years, and he claims to be only thirty-two now.

Miss Minnie Tracey, the American dramatic soprano, recently met with an enthusiastic reception in Geneva.

Emma Thursby is hereafter to spend her summers in Virginia, where she will build a fine residence near the Natural Bridge.

The new theatre which is building for Agnes Huntington in London will be opened by her in October. It will seat 2,000 people.

Mascogni's "Cuoullina Rusticana," the Italian opera by a new composer which has created such a furor, will soon be sung in St. Petersburg.

It is said that Francis Wilson is contemplating the production of a new opera in which Marie Jansen's abilities will be displayed to the best advantage. Another male costume part, we suppose.

When "Dr. Bill," the reigning success at the New York Garden Theatre, closes its engagement there, it will go on a tour which will include Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, and Washington.

The first performance of Sir Arthur Sullivan's new opera, "Ivanhoe," in London has been postponed until after the New Year, in order to give time for longer rehearsal. It is desired to make the first performance as perfect as possible.

Hugh Fay, the Irish comedian, has entered St. Luke's Hospital, New York, in order to be inoculated with Dr. Koch's lymph for the cure of consumption. Mr. Fay recently left the "McKenna's Flirtation" Company on account of poor health.

Joseph Mack, who for a time successfully managed Robert Downing, has lost his mind in consequence of a carriage accident last summer and has been placed in an asylum. A benefit will be given him in New York soon. Mr. Mack has many friends in Washington.

Some jocular individual has been circulating the story that Bill Nye is to go on the stage and star jointly with Stuart Robson. The truth of the matter is Robson is financially interested in a new farce comedy in which one of the characters will bear the name of *Bill Nye*.

The announcement that Dixey belongs to thirteen clubs will to the superstitious go far to explain the poor luck the former hind legs of the "Evangeline" heifer has been having of late, both at the poker table and on the stage. Harry should get himself expelled from a couple of the clubs.

One of the events of the Washington musical season will be the concert to be given here later by the famous pianist, Franz Rummel. Mr. Rummel ranks high among living pianists and his magnificent work has received the warmest praise from the great critics of Europe and America.

Giles Shine was called upon at very short notice to play the part of *Jacques d'Arc* at the matinee performance of "Joan of Arc" at the Fifth Avenue Theatre last Saturday. Mr. Shine is to be commended for the successful manner in which he acquitted himself of this difficult task. —N. Y. Mirror.

Emma Juch has brought suit against the St. Paul Gounod Club for \$500 due her for singing at the May Festival of this year. She made a contract last spring to sing for \$1,000, and received only half that amount, owing to the failure of the festival. She garnishees half a dozen prominent citizens who are among the guarantors.

The big spectacle of "Nero" was to have moved from Niblo's Garden, New York, to the Broadway Theatre, on Monday last, but Manager Gilmore, of the former house, seized the scenery for debt at the last moment, and so there were no "Nero" performances last week. Wilton Lackaye has retired from the company.

According to the dramatic papers, there is the liveliest sort of bidding among operatic managers to secure the services of Lillian Russell next year. One story is that she has been offered \$300 a performance to sing in German light opera, while Aronson, of the Casino, declares he is willing to give the fair Lillian a salary almost equal to that of the President of the United States.

Bob Fowning produced at Newark on Monday evening last Dumas's "Saracen," in which he will star for the rest of the season. The play deals with the civil wars in France during the reign of Charles VII, and is strongly and well put together, Mr. Downing filling the character of the Oriental brought to France by the Crusaders splendidly. He acted the part with care and ability and was warmly received by a large audience.

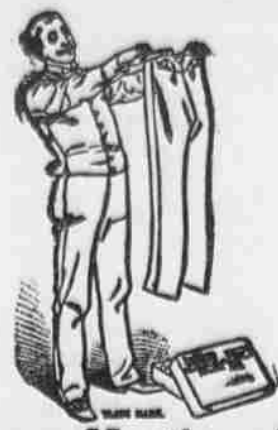
"The County Fair" bids fair to exceed the famous run of Denman Thompson's "Old Homestead." Neil Burgess's play continues to draw big houses at the Union Square Theatre, New York, while the company which is doing it on the road is playing everywhere to big crowds. A recent souvenir given away at the Union Square is an artistic medallion in bronze of Neil Burgess. It is a very beautiful piece of work, and the fact that Neil Burgess can afford to give his patrons so expensive a souvenir is the best indication of his prosperity.

Ben Stern, the well-known theatrical manager, who, with Marcus Mayer, has some of the biggest attractions on the road this season, including Agnes Huntington and Fanny Davenport, is now in Washington looking after the interests of Miss Huntington, who appears at Lincoln Hall, in "Paul Jones," next week. Davenport's great production of Sardou's "Cleopatra" will be seen for the first time at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on Tuesday night. Mr. Stern says it will, in every essential, be an exact reproduction of the one seen for the first time in Paris a couple of months ago, and in which Mme. Bernhardt created the title rôle. Among American actresses no one is better calculated, by training, experience and physical gifts, to portray *Cleopatra* than Miss Davenport; and for the fourth time she will repeat in the English language the French successes of Sarah Bernhardt, the others being *Fedora*, *La Tosca*, and *Theodora*. Upon the production which will be seen on Tuesday night at the Fifth Avenue Theatre something between \$40,000 and \$50,000 have been expended. The material production, that which appeals to the eye by means of glitter, richness of stuffs, historical accuracy, etc., will never have been surpassed on the American stage in any dramatic work.

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