



"ARE YOU A MASON?" AT THE METROPOLITAN.

A farce comedy that is credited with uncommon success as a mirth provoker, will occupy the Metropolitan stage the first four nights of this week beginning this evening. It bears the interrogative title "Are You a Mason?"

The company presenting it is headed by John C. Rice and Thomas A. Wise, two well known comedians whose capacity to entertain has long ago been unmistakably demonstrated. The comedy, which is an adaptation from the German by Leo Dittichstein, tells the following story:

An elderly married female having arrived at the conclusion that the lodge room is the only safe place for a husband (his own friends, of course, excepted), has decreed not only that her own husband shall become a Mason, but also that her daughter's worst half shall join. This decree from mother-in-law is sent, via the wife, to the young husband, Frank Perry, during Mrs. Perry's absence, with instructions that he shall join before she comes home. Unfortunately so much time has been consumed by the husband in his attempt to "be good" after his own ideas that he has forgotten all about the mystic order until a letter from his wife announcing her immediate return brings it to mind.

Her untimely arrival forces him to assert himself a Mason in order to explain his midnight wanderings, which a brisk housemaid exposes. He seems quite safe under the protection of "in-laws," which the encyclopedia explains is the first essential of the order, until his father-in-law arrives with mother-in-law.

According to current belief Mr. Bloodgood, the father-in-law, has been a mason for twenty-two years and is way up, thirty-seven degrees high; hence his arrival fills the bogus Perry with fear of exposure. It appears, however, that Bloodgood is also bogus, and the meeting of the two men, each supposing the other to be the real article, is absurdly funny.

The difficulties and embarrassments of the two frauds, abetted by the arrival of a real Mason who is in search of one of Bloodgood's daughters, and the anxious to be initiated into the lodge constitutes the rest of the story. The engagement is for four nights and a Wednesday matinee.

"THE GAMBLER'S DAUGHTER" AT THE GRAND.

A new melodrama entitled "A Gambler's Daughter," will be the attraction at the Grand Opera house this week. The play will have the same production and the same cast as in the original Chicago engagement. It is said to contain stirring scenes and picturesque stage settings.

The heroine is the daughter of a leading Chicago board of trade man, who also secretly maintains a gilded and luxurious gambling palace on the avenue. The daughter, Kate, discovers the true character of her father only

JOHN C. RICE AND THOS. A. WISE

In "Are You a Mason?" at the Metropolitan Tonight.

after the latter, aided by his unscrupulous partner, has conspired against the honor of her lover. By her brilliant deals on the board of trade made through her broker, she ruins her father financially, winning from him nearly every cent he has. On the same night she visits her father's gambling hell where he is desperately trying to make up his day's losses on the board. Disguised as a Spanish woman, she breaks the bank playing faro, and the father in a frenzy tears the mask from her face. His rage knows no bounds when he discovers it is his own daughter who has wrought his ruin and discovered his iniquities. After many more exciting adventures the lover and his sweetheart see the clouds of their distress move away and they are reunited, the father being reclaimed from his evil ways.

The role of the daughter is assumed by Miss Clara Thropp. Others in the company playing the principal roles are Fannie Argye, Arthur J. Pickens, George E. Mitchell, Benson A. LaMar, George Lyle Cox, Lavina Thompson and Allie Willard. By no means the least interesting portions of the performance are the songs and specialties that are introduced.

NANCE O'NEIL AT THE METROPOLITAN.

If the unexpurgated ardor of the advance agent's rhetoric can be relied

upon, next week's offering at the theaters are of a sort to make us forget all past dramatic sorrows.

At the Metropolitan theater next Thursday night Miss Nance O'Neil, the young American tragedienne, will begin a two night's engagement in an elaborate production of Herman Suderman's play, "Magda," the central figure of which is held to be one of Miss O'Neil's greatest creations.

"Elizabeth, Queen of England," will follow on Friday night. "Camille" will be given at the matinee performance, and "The Jewess" on Saturday night, which will close the engagement.

The version of "Magda" used by Miss O'Neil is an adaptation from "Helmuth." It was first produced in London in 1895 and has since been played in the world by the genius of Eleanor Duse, who played it in Italian, and Sara Bernhardt, who of course gave a French translation.

The story of the play deals chiefly with the contest for supremacy between Col. Schwartz, a retired officer of the German army, and his oldest daughter, Magda, whom he has driven from home for refusing to marry the man he had selected for her. During her absence of twelve years or more in the world, Magda is betrayed by a Dr. Von Keller and deserted. Subsequently, however, she rises to fame as an operatic singer and returns to her native village as the star of a great musical festival.

There she again meets her betrayer and her father discovers the secret of their former intrigue. He makes her choose between death or becoming the wife of Von Keller, but she must give up her child. This Magda refuses to do under the prompting of mother love. Just as her father is about to shoot her he is seized with another fatal stroke of paralysis, but forgives her with his dying breath.

WALDRON & BRYANT'S TROCADERO AT THE STAR.

That clever band of comedians and hand-stand girls, Waldron & Bryant's Trocadero Burlesquers, will be the attraction at the Star theater this week, beginning with a matinee today.

This is the second season of this organization and its success last season will probably be remembered by all who had the pleasure of enjoying its performance. The comedians are sterling performers and the girls of the company are young and pretty. Two new amusing skits have been especially written for the company and they are full of funny situations, breezy dialogue, and deftly made and arranged so that during their action there will be plenty of opportunity for the introduction of pleasing specialties, songs, dances, and musical numbers.

The first part is entitled "Prince Henry's Reception" and is a merry satire of the doings of Kaiser's brother while in this country. Larry Smith, a funny little Dutch comedian will be seen in the role of Prince Henry and he will be assisted by W. W. McEvoy, who will play the part of his

temperature will be at such a low ebb that this theater will be the desirable spots this coming summer. Managers Scott and Ferris promise a capable company for the summer. The season will be open with the play "Graustark." This will be the bill for one week. The personnel of the company will be announced in a few days.

DRAMATIC GOSSIP.

C. B. and Thomas Jefferson will make a revival of their old success, "The Shadows of a Great City," this season.

"Lights of Home," is the title of the Little Bluff Park drama that will be seen at the Fourteenth street theater, New York, next fall. The scenic features embracing nine big scenic company will be employed in the presentation.

Out of the eleven musical comedies that have been seen on Broadway since the first of January, only three remain, and two of these, "The Sultan of Sulu" and "The Prince of Pilsen," were both stamped with success in the West before they were brought to New York. Both pieces give promise of continuing through the summer.

Joseph Haworth is to star next season in a play by Theodore Burt Sayre, called "The King's Highway."

Maxine Elliott, while abroad this summer, will be the guest of the Emperor and Empress of Germany on a yacht cruise along the Baltic.

Frank Moulan and his wife, Maude Lillian Herr, have lately turned their attention to song writing. Two have already been published under assumed names and have been successful enough to have brought them to the conclusion of putting their real names to them in the future.

The late Stuart Robson was a free thinker, and it was a notable feature of the last rites of his remains that no stereotyped funeral service was conducted. There were, however, a brief eulogy by Augustus Thomas, and thus ended the career of one of the most famous actors of the American stage's history.

Nothing daunted by the failure of "Du Barry" in Berlin, it is more than likely now that Mrs. Carter will go abroad with that piece when her American engagements are closed, and will appear in London and Paris, as Belasco retains the French and English rights to the piece.

Paris has a new sensation in the bequest of 100,000 francs to M. Coquelin by Madame Renaud, who admitted the actor but was unknown to him. It is said that Coquelin will transfer the entire sum to a worthy charity, he has refused to accept it for his own use.

Oliver Doud Byron, the actor of sensational plays, will hardly feel the loss of his come by fire at Long Branch, financially, for he owns some thirty others in the vicinity. Outside of that he is very rich. Byron has big money in "Across the Continent," a play now quite obsolete.

Henry Irving quarreled with Sardou

FANNY ARGYLE.

With "A Gambler's Daughter," at the Grand.

before "Dante" was produced in London because he deemed it proper to cut the ropes out of the depicting hell. Now he has grounds for a much graver quarrel, for, from all accounts, "Dante" has proven to be the biggest financial failure of the English player ever had on his hands. It is said that the production cost a snug fortune, and there is little chance for Sir Henry to recover his losses.

New Yorkers ought to be able to find some amusement in life next winter; there will be sixty-five theaters devoted to drama, musical-comedy, vaudeville and burlesque. This includes only theaters that are realities; there are a lot more on paper that may materialize later. Then there is the Metropolitan opera house for grand opera, the Madison Square Garden for the horse show, circus and other big exhibits, and innumerable dime museums and music halls. But Greater New York is a big town.

Ezra Kendall and his "Vinegar Boves" seem to have made an unexpected hit in New York. His engagement at the Bayview theater, assuming the name of Polly Eccles. After her English season closes Miss Tempest will take a well-earned vacation and then come over to this country, which she has not visited since her deserted comic opera for legitimate work.

Speaking of comedy, a combination just formed, by which Otis Skinner and Ada Rehan are to be seen as joint stars next season, brings to mind that they will devote their entire season to it. In a measure this combination should prove one of the most artistic organizations of the modern stage. Both Mr. Skinner and Miss Rehan are graduates of that famous old school, where the best of the period was made. They have both of them, all of the day, mounting to back up their work. As announced now their repertoire will embrace revivals of "The Merchant of Venice," "The School for Scandal" and "Taming of the Shrew." With Mr. Skinner as Shylock, Charles Squire and Petruchio in these respective plays his admirers are promised a delight, especially when taken into consideration that there is even more to be seen in the same company. Mr. Rehan has kept any record of the stage is familiar. As for Mr. Skinner, his reading is one of the distinct charms of every show he does. With two such artists at the helm these old plays should certainly take on a new interest, and there is every reason to believe that they will be given in a manner as perfect as perfection can be attained at this time. It certainly is a happy blend of exceptionally talented stars and modern great deal for the new season.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The long expected announcement that Miss Eleanor Robson is to be a star next season has at last been made. Her work this year in "Andrey" and more particularly her remarkable success in the all-star production of "Romeo and Juliet," have fully warranted the elaborate arrangements made by Liebler & Co. for her tour at the head of her own company. A contract has been signed with Edwin

Arden, who has been engaged as her leading man, and the two plays intended for her use have been decided upon. One of them is "La Vallee," a play written by Henry Batille, the famous Parisian adapter of "Resurrection," especially for Miss Robson.

The other play accepted for Miss Robson is now being written, especially for her by Mrs. Humphrey Ward and Mr. Louis N. Parker, and this has already advanced sufficiently to encourage the hope that it will prove a play of marvelous strength. It is entitled "Agatha," and will be an original English society drama, not a book adaptation, in which the characters will be drawn with the gifted English author's supreme skill, and to which Mr. Parker, the famous author of "Rosemary," will lend his best efforts as a playwright.

When Stuart Robson appeared for the last time in "The Henrietta" at the Grand opera house in this city, he remarked to some friends after the performance that this was the last time "The Henrietta" would ever be played. So jealous was he at the thought that any other actor should appear in his role of Bertie, that I understand he had a provision in his will that all the manuscripts connected with the play should be destroyed immediately upon his death. It was his favorite saying of his that, next to his wife, "The Henrietta" is the finest woman in the world. One placed upon which Robson was particularly sensitive was his age. He was such a complete master of make-up that few who saw him in the role of Bertie ever realized how old he was. J. H. Stoddard was talking with Robson about "The Bonaparte" shortly before he sailed for Nova Scotia, and remarked that he

discernment of the spectators, making them fear themselves for the astuteness at discovering knavery under a mask? No, far from it. Bensley's lark was successful, says Lamb, because it would have been as it did the audience as effectually as it did the Moor into believing him a steadfast, well-meaning friend to the latter, if the audience had not heard his confessions in colloquy or seen his scenes with Rodrigo. And thus Mansfield's Brutus may have effectually carried out the idea of a simple, unassuming good man who never thought of talking or acting for effect. His only really thrilling public utterance was spoken just after the assassination, in the endeavor to quiet apprehension and to assume mainly responsibility for the deed. The speech from the forum was no dramatic oration. It was nothing more than a manly explanation of why he had acted as he had and it was perhaps delivered as such the better to contrast with Anthony's subsequent speech. And to consider the adjective "incredulous" it is probably true that at times Mansfield's Brutus is open to the very opposite criticism if insufficient pathos, of perhaps speaking too coldly the beautiful lines that liken Portia to his heart's blood and the ones that contain the mystical faith in the tide in the affairs of men. The former are capable of containing infinite tenderness and the latter may hold all the solemnity

NANCE O'NEIL



Who Will Appear in Repertoire at the Metropolitan at the End of the Week.

would use the same play next season. "By the way," said Mr. Robson, "there is a great opportunity in it for an old man. That just fits you, doesn't it?"

"That's not so very old," replied Mr. Stoddard. "I'm not so very old."

"Why," said the actor, "I had to ask my mother to let me go to see one of the first performances of Joseph Jefferson in 'The Henrietta.' That isn't so bad for an aged man."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The business of the cheque has been subdivided into many branches, all of which are controlled by one man or group of men. The appliers—even the lady in the box who faints and the man who hisses at a good part in order to arouse the indignation of the audience—are all provided for so many tickets a performance, to be sold by agents to the public. So carefully were the plans of campaign thought out that the Whiteley of appliers used to provide a man or woman dressed in provincial style to jump up and scream out, "There's the villain hiding behind that tree," or the like. We also hear of cowboys in the far West pulling out their revolvers and peppering the melons of the audience. "Can you book a London theater the business instinct came out in the same way. A relative of the lesser was once engaged to play a dominant father whose son had got into the hands of the money lenders. In the inter-vening lecture, him, and then demanded a view with the money lender the father said his son's bill. "There," said he, "is my check for a thousand pounds." The money lender was just reaching out for the check when a voice came from the pit: "Don't you take it, old chap. I've got one of his now for six pound ten, and I asked me to hold it for a fortnight."—Chambers Journal.

We often hear some one say, "The show business ain't what it used to be," and although the complainer's remark is not prompted by progress and advancement, he is right. "It ain't what it used to be." Never were the possibilities so great, the conditions so handsome, or well conducted, as the plays so well staged or acted or the public so willing to patronize good plays as now. Gone forever is the "cheap day" advance agent—be it of the tall shiny hat, the big yellow diamond and the long black wig, who "ad" always read "Can you book a show, know the country backwards, not afraid of work, carry a paste brush and overalls in my bill-trunk and can post 'em four high without a ladder." Gone also are the motley crowds that gathered at Fourth street and Union Square a decade ago to swap yarns of great triumph in Ypsilanti and Downgrade. In their place are the great office buildings along Broadway and Thirty-sixth to Forty-second streets, almost entirely devoted to theatrical business. From these offices companies are routed months, and frequently years, ahead, as there is hardly a town of any importance but has a reputation in one or the other of the theatrical exchanges. The advance agent, the business manager of today possesses the "showman's instinct" while outwardly he savors of a commercial training. He can write good copy, has a large acquaintance with business people, attends to the details of the company with accuracy and dispatch and moves on. "Some one" was right. "The show business ain't what it used to be."

Mansfield's Brutus

One of the pleasantest and certainly one of the more headlined successes of the season, is the gleaming of our after-math reflections, our sense of ripening consciousness of its fine points, and what is still more pleasant and beneficial, the interthreading of our uttered comment with that of a fellow spectator. Will the "savage" who spoke in last Sunday's Globe of Richard Mansfield's presentation of Julius Caesar, allow a little friendly interchange of opinion in the spirit of controversy, but rather with a motive of finding points of agreement as well as of difference?

First, as to Mr. Mansfield's conception of the character of Brutus. The exceeding quietness of the impersonation was doubtless due to the thought that this contrast with the adjective "gentle" accorded him in the text. Reference may be made to Charles Lamb's essay "On Some of the Old Actors" in which he speaks of Bonaparte's lark as being done surpassing well, being, in fact, consummate acting and why? Because it appealed to the

of reverent acknowledgment of unseen things. They have, in fact, become incorporated into all English speaking character. It is right to say that in the tent scene, Mansfield bore out the quality of greatness afterwards ascribed to him, and that strongly contrasted to this was the terrified haste, after seeing the vision, with which he roused the sleepers. Throughout the whole play his only departure into heroic delivery was his command, after rousing the sleepers, that the powers set on him, and one is willing to admit that this only declamatory utterance, with its attitude of uplifted arm as the curtain closed, was slightly disappointing as being rather out of keeping with the previous simplicity of the impersonation.

The death of Brutus is perhaps justly criticised as being unnatural. True

MAMIE CHAMPION



With Trocadero Company at the Star.

It was not enacted with the conventional, significant thud upon the stage intended to make the audience aware that the character had become corpse. The death of Brutus was natural, that nobody knew precisely how long he breathed after the sword wound. But this was the last of the play, and he made his body slide down from its elevation with the expiration of his strength. Perhaps the aptest adverse criticism may be that the actor's sense of unconscious proof that Brutus was the lovable, generally esteemed

AMUSEMENTS.

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consideration for senatorial etiquette and prevalent stolid philosophy, if our eyes must take in the spectacle of a man being slain at least let our senses be stimulated by all necessary enlivening noise.

Perhaps one of the chief results of Mansfield's Brutus may be the thrust of Brutus of history—the making of elbow room for Mark Antony. The latter was formerly a fine impersonation. Perhaps as good as the declamation to the mob was the previous apostrophe to the corpse of Caesar when left alone with it in the senate house, and the quick dramatic dialogue with the envoy of Lepidus. The apostrophe was the revelation of reality beneath artifice. The latter showed the instinctive, instantaneous adjustment of an unexpected circumstance to the new thought of deeply rooted cunning.

Shakespeare is grand in his compensating conclusions. Montague and Capulet shake hands over the bodies of Romeo and Juliet. King Lear admits he was wrong, and that he does justice to Cordelia is the only sane and sane of the highest it could have. And we might follow out interminably this study he gives us of the homage of wrong to right, the epitomized human nature, vitalized thought, letting each of us find and prove ourselves in him, prove likewise the law of personal influence that leaves one character by another and prove most of all his own abiding faith in human nature with the deeper and more tragic, being degrading enactments of crime, Othello's better nature is not changed, it is simply made subservient to Iago's craft. Shylock's rage, though it is as much that of a bereaved father as of a defrauded money-lender, is self-suggested, as are the terrible misconceptions of Lear and Leontes, and though Macbeth is a study of a suborned will rather than of a mistaken apprehension, even in him t hebbeter man speaks of the servile to those inevitable, beautiful raptures of remorse.

And to come back to our study, Brutus, our immortal universal poet, was shown as a nature played upon by the more vitalized, but less noble thoughts of another, subservient to a mistaken patriotism, victimized by its own nobility. It takes the Shakespeare to make an assassin seem good, to redeem both the tragedy of Julius Caesar and his chief character from the degenerating spectacle of wrong-doing. For our late opportunity for this ennobling study we are certainly thankful. We are likewise grateful for any discussion that serves to intensify our impression of the grandest of poets.

—C. K.

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