

## Forgnette.

This week has been one of comic opera at the Marquam—Aronson's New York Casino Company in "Erminie," "Black Hussar" and "Nadja." The performances have been, indeed, comic, but in a sense different from that intended by the librettos. None of the people in the company appear fitted by nature or art to fill any of the characters they assume; they can neither sing nor act. "Erminie" was given on Monday and Tuesday nights. The opera is too well known and popular to require any synopsis. That the motif is an adaptation of Robertson's old play, "Robert Macaire," is known to all theater goers. Miss Helen Lamont, as Erminie, is very beautiful, and her gowns lovely. Alas! that more can not be said. She can not sing the music, and seems to think the part a well dressed Fanchon. It is doubtful if Maggie Mitchell makes more turns, twists and gyrations in the "shadow-dance" than does Miss Lamont all through the opera. She does not appear to understand the meaning of repose. In the first act every strand of that beautiful gown is continuously snapping like so many whip cords. The charms of the second and third acts are marred in the same manner, not alone by Miss Lamont but by the orchestra and chorus; everything is too fast. The whole beauty and dignity of the dance, in the second act, is lost by the rapidity of the music. Miss Hanly seems to be also imbued with the spirit of Miss Lamont's activity. At times she appears possessed of a frantic desire to get her heels over her head; once she nearly accomplished that difficult feat. It is remarkable how well-bred, intelligent people will sit under so called comedy, which, rightly named, is vulgarity, without protest. These same acts performed by some social acquaintances would place them in Coventry for ever. Some of the antics of Cadeaux in drinking and eating are insufferably bad. Gilbert and Sullivan, with others, have proved that good, healthy comedy and humor can be portrayed without vulgarity and coarseness. The chorus contains some very fine looking men and pretty girls. The costumes are bright and dainty, and the stage setting beautiful. The staircase scene of the last act was especially good, the light effects being very fine. The pink ball room was also very pretty.

The "Black Hussar," by Millocket, is above the average comic opera in that the story is not only good but interesting as well. What is more, it abounds with good music; some of the airs are particularly fine. The plot is laid in Germany, in the year 1812, during the war between Russia and France. Two young officers of the Black Hussars, Herbert and Waldemar, repair to the house of the burgomaster,

Herbert disguised as an army chaplain, the other as a student, the burgomaster having in the meantime disguised his two daughters as old women, as a precaution against their being carried off by the soldiers of either army. The young soldiers ply successful suit to the daughters' hearts, and at the last are rewarded by their father's consent to their union. The chorus does some very good work, which is more than can be said of the majority of the principals. Miss Lamont, as Minna, and Miss Hanley, as Rosetta, the burgomaster's daughters, are principally occupied in looking pretty, in which they succeed; but that is all, for neither of them meet the vocal requirements of the score. The makeup of Miss Genevieve Reynolds, as Barbara, is admirable, and in the last act she does some very clever work. Lloyd Wilson, as Herbert, and Ross David, as Waldemar, keep Miss Lamont and Miss Hanley company in looking picturesque. As Heckenbach, Mr. R. E. Graham appeared to much better advantage than as Ravennes in "Erminie." The most brilliant thing about Mr. DeLange's Piffkow was his diamond ring.

At Cordray's theatre the stock company has been giving Dion Boucicault's "Lod Astray." It is hardly to be expected that Miss Essie Tittell can meet the requirements of the role of Armande Chandoce. It is, to say the least, a difficult part, and Miss Tittell does not grasp it. Her emotion is too emotional, as she is at times too gay. Miss Minnie Tittell would improve if she paid more attention to her grammar. Mr. French, as Rodolph Chandoce, was neither better nor worse than usual. Mr. Albert Lando's Mount Gosline was simply idiotic.

"Little Lord Fauntleroy" is rapidly gaining an international reputation and a polyglot character. Preparations are being made for producing it in Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway in the language of those countries, and it will probably not stop short of translation into the Sanscrit, Zulu and Patagonian tongues. Even as the "Tenas Tyee" it might sweep over the northern wilds and into the icy fields of Alaska, clothed in the meagre garb of the Chinook.

Mr. Cohen, the composer, best known by his mythological pastoral "Endymion," has produced a new opera at the Rouen Theatre des Arts. It is based upon Byron's "Siege of Corinth," and is entitled "Venetian." The libretto is by Louis Gallot. The opera was well received.