AT THE THEATERS

The great success of William Collier, whose comedy, "On the Quiet," delighted three big houses at the Marquam the last of the week, is due solely to a resolute intention to succeed. When Collier was about 7 years old he felt that he had a call to the stage, and promptly left home and joined a juvenile opera company. Restored to his ancestral roof by a heavy paternal hand, he soon had another call, and joined forces with Augustin Daly in the production of fine plays in New York, Mr. Daly acting as manager and Mr. Collier as call boy. He learned things at Daly's. One of them was that he was not the whole company, and another was to do all his talking on the stage to the other characters in the play, and not to the audience, something many celebrated actors have not yet had time to learn. After serving his term as call boy and acting small parts, Mr. Collier was made assistant stage manager, and soon was sent on the road with Daly's out-of-town productions. Next he did a little acting on his own account, and brought himself forcibly to the public notice by his acting in "Hoss and Hoss," a comedy which made liberal use of that form of amusement whose symbol is the slapstick.

But the young man was not content with that kind of comedy, and when the opportunity for better things came in the form of "The Man from Mexico," he proved that he was in condition to grasp it, and proceeded to make a hit. "Mexico" was followed by "Mr. Smooth," a comedy of his own writing, and while not so uproariously funny, was much more artistic in construction and consistent in plot. Last of all came "On the Quiet," a comedy which Augustus Thomas wrote for Nat Goodwin, but which Goodwin never used. It was an instantaneous hit, and has firmly established Collier's reputation as a comedian.

The young actor is ambitious, and aims at still more difficult targets, although the tragedy bee has not yet begun to buzz in his hat. He has steadily improved because he has tried to, not because circumstances were such that he could not help it. He will produce a new play in New York shortly after the first of the year, and there is little doubt, now those who have gone before are sidetracking in tragedy, that he will within a very few months be known as America's leading comedian. All success to him, he has earned his honors.

"Shore Acres" will never die so long as it is given by as good a company as that seen at the Marquam this week. James A. Herne cannot live as an actor, because as such his work died with him, but his methods and his plays will perpetuate his name for years to come, and the style of drama he has founded—unmechanical realism—will adorn the stage for all time.

The Wilbur-Kirwin Opera Company has played to good business at the Baker this week, and it gives good entertainment for the money. There seems to be little doubt that the engagement will be a success, and that Manager Baker used his usual good judgment in booking the attraction.

"A Wise Woman," at Cordray's, has few people in the cast, but the company was better than the average road company, and had the comedy been up to the company the business would have been better.

ATTRACTIONS THIS WEEK.

Black Patti Troubadours at Cordray's Theater.

The Black Patti Troubadours, announced to appear at Cordray's tonight and all next week, will present, among other pleasing novelties, their new musical comedy skit, "A Filipino Misfit," with John Rucker, the "Alabama Blossom," in the leading comedy role. This is said to be a funny creation, and a capital vehicle for the display of the varsatile talent of this clever comedian and the supporting company. Black Patti will also appear in an entirely new musical act, called the "Songs of Dixie Land," assisted by the entire singing forces of the company. This accomplished singer will also appear in the new operatic finale, always one of the standard features of the performances. Other new features are the marvelous feats of Mack Allen on the slack wire; the Var Valins, musical wizards; John Rucker, in monologue; the Troubadour quartet, in the latest ballad successes, and the genuine gold medal prize cake-walk contest. While the cake-walk has always been a popular and pleasing feature in the Black Patti Troubadours repertoire, it is to be an event of special interest at this performance, since it is to be a free-for-all contest, and a valuable gold medal is to be offered to the winning couple. This event will, doubtless, bring many local cake-walkers in competition with those of the Black Patti Company, and as the audience is to act as judge of the contest, a very exciting time may be anticipated.

Wilbur-Kirwin Opera Company at the Baker.

The Wilbur-Kirwin Opera Company will begin the second week of its engagement at the Baker Theater at the matinee this afternoon, when "The Two Vagabonds" will be presented. The repertoire for the week is as follows: Sunday matinee and night, and Monday night, "The Two Vagabonds"; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday night and Wednesday matinee, "Fra Diavolo"; Friday and Saturday night and Saturday matinee, Gilbert & Sullivan's "H. M. S. Pinafore." Forest Huff, who scored as Pooh Bah in the Mikado last week, will sing the title role in "Fra Diavolo."

An elaborate series of living pictures, identical with those shown in Proctor's Theater, New York, will be given between the acts of the operas this week, and the other specialty features will be strong. The company has succeeded in making a reputation as an excellent popular price organization, and the good business it has been doing will, without doubt, be duplicated this week.

Griffith, "the Hypnotist."

There is not a show of the kind this season that can show a cleaner record as an amusement enterprise than can the Griffith Hypnotic Company, who come to the Marquam Grand for a week starting Monday, December 9. Mr. Griffith maintains that the public want to be entertained and amused rather than mystified and terrified, and proceeding on this theory he has loaded himself down with a cargo of bright, catchy and to-date tests, in which, while they are amusing in every way, he has not lost sight of the fact that his audience is entitled to a fair share of knowledge regarding their induction, and despite the incongruity of title, one will not be bored with a repetition of the seventeenth-century methods. The public will see fun, pure and simple and unadulterated, presented in a refined way by one who has no peer as an exponent in the art of presenting hypnotism as it is recognized by the scientific world today. Griffith will give a demonstration of thought-reading, which consists of driving a four-in-hand over a devious course, previously selected by a committee, and locating a hidden article. This he will do driving at a breakneck speed and while securely blindfolded, starting in front of the Marquam Grand Opera-House at 2:30 Monday.

COMING EVENTS.

Richard Golden in "Old Jed Prouty."

Richard Golden's "Old Jed Prouty," which comes to Cordray's next week, seems as near an approach as possible to what a play should be. It depicts very truthfully country life in New England about half a century ago. The moral of the play is decidedly good, and were every caterer for public entertainment to give so healthful and innocent a performance as this is, parents and guardians of youth would no longer cry out as they now do against the immorality of theater-going. Entertainments of this sort are entitled to the stanchest support of the religious press. Mr. Golden will be seen for the last time in this play next week.

Grau's Opera Company.

The reputation of Grau's singers is worldwide. The productions are absolutely perfect in every detail. No expense has been spared in staging the different operas in the repertoire. The company numbers over 45 people, with a list of principals whose names are well known in the musical and theatrical world, among whom may be mentioned: Miss Mary Carrington, Bessie Tannerhill, Mamie Scott, Mattie Martz, Mr. Harry Davies, Robert Dunbar, Robert Kane, H. C. Arnold, Edward Eagelton and Stanley Felch, a young and popular chorus. This organization will shortly appear at the Marquam Grand.

"THE WAY OF THE WORLD."

The Play That Is Attracting the Upper Tendom in New York.

Literature is full of references to a certain bird called the cuckoo. It is a rather marvelous bird, if we may believe the divine Shakespeare, for it lays its eggs in the nests of other birds for them to hatch. Now, Mr. Clyde Fitch has been doing the cuckoo act. Several decades ago, one Congreve, not an inferior, though somewhat salacious, writer of comedy, wrote a play called "The Way of the World." It was in some ways a masterpiece of comedy. It is in this nest, by a deliberate use of the famous title, that Mr. Fitch has laid his egg—and he has laid it scrambled! A most unusual play it is, too, and how startled Congreve would be at this hatching! Surely my Lady Montague could have learned a lesson in rouge, and surely Colley Cibber would have exclaimed, "Why, odds-fish and gadzooks, to say nothing of odds-bobs, it's fine sherry; damme, it's fine!" And this is the reason of it all.

The opera season has not begun yet. Society may not, therefore, find a pretext of going undressed in public. The ordinary theaters are so taken up with pieces upon the elemental simplicity and sincerity of every-day life, that they appeal to the middle class mainly. Consequently, they are bourgeois, and so—well, a bit impossible. So when Miss Elsie de Wolf came to the city and opened in the Victoria, a former burlesque house, by the way, a brilliant idea came to the society class. Here was a chance for an aristocratic theater. Thus the "400" set their seal upon "The Way of the World." And if you would see sables weighing down fair shoulders, or heavy pendant jewels bobbing upon French coiffures and Parisian bodices, or if you would know the latest in flowing "creations," called wraps, and study the exquisite art of dainty make-up, or if you would have the chance of your life and would sit next to Mrs. Van Gandersook or the Countess Dieudrop—why, go to to Hammerstein's Victoria and hold your breath and look and listen. For $2 you may brush elbows with the best and feel like a millionaire—without a cent in your pocket.

As for the play and the actors, well, they are something of an after-thought. The plot deals with the lives of the Croydens, husband and wife, loving society top-notchers. The husband goes into politics. The wife amuses herself with a harmless enough flirtation. At election time the usual stories begin to circulate in the papers. A nasty scandal is printed about the wife and the man with whom she has been flirting. There is the expected domestic quarrel and the equally expected final reconciliation. It is said on the best authority that the play is absolutely true to the life that it depicts, and that the conversation and conduct are faithful portrayals of those of the Fifth-avenue drawing-room.

All this goes to show that the play is clever, everlastingly clever. And that is really the final judgment upon it. The whole first act takes place in an automobile which is running in Central Park, where it breaks down. The last act gives a view of fireworks which are set off in honor of Croyden's election. It speaks of Tammany and May Irwin. It is very clever, indeed, and it probably depicts the way of the world, at least a little chunk of what is called world by a certain class. To ask whether it is sincere and true to the broader and more real things of life is "to enquire too nicely." Mr. Fitch has again demonstrated how skillful a dramatic technician he is, how well he can handle comedy and satire, how much he can make out of nothing.

In regard to the acting, it is good—excellent. Miss Elsie de Wolf, who is the nominal "star," is a capable actress, with a moderate range of talent, which the play does not seem to tax. The best acting is done by the woman who did the best acting in Amelia Bingham's company last year—by Miss Bloodgood. She is quite wonderful in a way, especially in parts that call for "jerky emotion." The male roles are all capably handled. The staging and mechanical business are done perfectly. But after all, it isn't the acting nor the drama that one goes to see. The play's the pretext; the crowd's the thing.

WYNDHAM.

Notes of the Stage.

Out of the 12 turns on the programme of the largest vaudeville house in Berlin last week, nine were American.

"Sherlock Holmes" has been so successful in London that William Gillette will keep it on until late next Spring.

Florence Hastings, a New York actress, has sued a street railway company there because, as she alleges, a conductor kicked her.

The success of Ethel Barrymore with "Captain Jinks" in the Western cities has been very pronounced, especially at Cincinnati.

An elaborate production of "Arizona" will be made in London about the first of the year. All the performers will be English.

A big benefit is being arranged for Mrs. Haverly in New York. The ex-minstrel manager's death left her in not too affluent circumstances.

"The Girl From Maxim's" has not yet been seen in London, and Charles Frohman will present the piece in that city about February 1.

"Pudd'nhead Wilson" is experiencing quite a revival. A number of stock companies in the West are preparing to put it on during December.

Hugh Morton, who is in Paris, is said to be at work on a melodrama, having become convinced that comic literature has ceased to be his long suit.

Edwin Arnold has been engaged to create the leading role in the new play "Ninety and Nine," founded on the hymn of that name.

Hans Robert has signed a contract with May Irwin to appear as leading man in her forthcoming New York revival of "The Widow Jones."

Frank Pixley, the author of "King Dodo," will return from abroad next month. He sends word that his new opera is practically completed.

Maurice Barrymore, who has been gradually failing for some time, is now reported to be in a critical condition. The end is probably not far off.

Marjorie Murray, 13 years old, has played Cissie in an English production of "The Silver King" nearly 700 times without being out of the cast once.

Willie Edouin, the clever English comedian, has written a new protean comedy, in which he and his daughter May will star in this country next season.

Blanche Bates has so far recovered from her recent illness that she has been moved from the Detroit Hospital, where she has been for many weeks, to Chicago.

Geoffrey Stein comes to this city with Henrietta Crosman's Company, with which he has been doing notable work both as an actor and as a stage manager.

When "Floradora" reached Dallas, Tex., last week the theater was not completed, and the performance was given in a circus tent. The crowd was immense, and the police had to be called on to prevent a riot.

When Virginia Earle decides to go upon the vaudeville stage she can command a weekly salary of $500. A standing offer at these figures awaits Miss Earle's pleasure.

Mrs. Gilbert, who has been ill for the past couple of weeks, was well enough last Monday night to rejoin the Annie Russell company, playing her old part in "A Royal Family."

Blanche Homan and company will shortly put on an original sketch, entitled "The Little Duchess." It will first be presented at Keith's in New York and then go over the circuit.

Clyde Fitch's "The Last of the Dandies" has made such a big hit in London that Beerbohm Tree, who is playing the title part, will keep it on the boards until the end of February.

Frank Daniels, in "Miss Simplicity" and "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," two of Kirke La Shelle's attractions, will probably appear in London after the season closes in this country.

"The oGld Mine," Nat Goodwin's old success, and which won its first approval at the hands of a German company in New York, was recently successfully presented in Berlin.

Edward Harrigan and Mrs. Yeamans will play in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," commencing next week, in Boston, for the first time in the same company since the old Harrigan-Hart days.

Captain Basil Hood's comedy, "Sweet and Twenty," will have its first American presentation in New York December 30. The performers for the principal parts have not yet been selected.

Phoebe Davis is again in the cast of "Way Down East" after her recent illness. It was the first time she has been absent from the company since the play was produced five years ago.

Emma Carus, who has been playing with "The King's Carnival" Company in Boston, is back in New York, suffering from a serious case of peritonitis. Miss Carus blames her illness on the Boston climate.

Edward E. Rose, of London, and George C. Tyler, representing Liebler & Co., have come to an agreement concerning "The Christian King." An elaborate production will be made for James O'Neill next season.

Annie O'Neill, who will be remembered as the leading lady for William H. Crane some years back, has been selected for the leading role in Charles Frohman's forthcoming production of "Sweet and Twenty."

Reports from London say that Elfie Fay has become tired of the English metropolis and will sail for New York next week. As all the prominent American jockeys in England are coming home next week, another cause for Miss Fay's return might be found.

Edward McWade has written a new play entitled "The Land of Mystery," for Margaret May, and it will shortly have its first production. Miss May is now starring in "Winchester," also written by Mr. McWade.

A number of theatrical managers met last week in St. Louis and took the initial step toward forming a syndicate that will include 40 cities and which may tend to control the burlesque show business in this country.

James K. Hackett produced Edward Rose's latest play, "A Chance Ambassador," in Baltimore last Saturday night. The piece is reported to have scored a hit, and bears a resemblance to "Rupert of Hentzau."

An entire new third act is to be written into the "Liberty Belles," and it is expected that the addition will brighten up the piece considerably. The new act will be seen for the first time a week from next Monday.

The Fanchonetti Sisters, who made a hit here in the early Summer with Chase's Musical Comedy Stock Company, are with "Fiddle-Dee-Dee," an elaborate production, which ran for 220 performances in Buffalo during the exposition.

After an illness of six months Jessie May, wife of Daniel McAvoy, the comedian, died in New York last Monday night. Pneumonia was the cause. McAvoy and May have been a popular team on the variety stage for the past decade.

Managers from time to time have used the words "presents," "introduces" and "offers" in speaking of their various stars on programmes and billboards, but the latest variation comes from a manager who "submits" his present star.

The managers of "Florodora" have cautioned managers of theaters in the West against allowing companies booked at their respective houses to use the double sextet in "Florodora" or any of the other musical numbers of that comedy.

MME. SISSIERETTA JONES, "BLACK PATTI," AT CORDRAY'S TONIGHT.

GRIFFITH, THE HYPNOTIST, AT THE MARQUAM THIS WEEK.

Music

THE SYMPHOY CONCERT

Mozart's "Jupiter"—The Spitzner Recital—Gaul's "Holy City" Today at 3 P. M.

The coming symphony concert, the first of the season, which is to take place Tuesday, December 17, under the direction of Edgar T. Coursen, will have for its central feature Mozart's symphony in C major. The quaint instrumentation of this, the last and greatest of all Mozart's symphonies, harks back to the time when the right of clarinets and trombones to a place in the orchestra was the cause of raised eyebrows and wondering glances. Neither of these instruments was introduced into this work, which is scored for strings, a flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, and tympani. Yet in spite of the primeval simplicity of this instrumentation, Mozart has thrown into the work a serenity and dignity that are Greek, rather than German. The finale attains a daring boldness of conception, an almost cosmic complexity of intellectual plan, that have given it the well-known title of "Jupiter symphony," a name that is further justified by the recurrence of the "hammer-theme," which flashes out from the orchestra like one of Jove's thunderbolts.

The symphony is made up of the customary four movements; the first—allegro vivace — contains three well-defined themes, the third being of surpassing beauty. The second movement—andante cantabile—brings out the wood-wind in high relief. The menuetto—allegretto—is a dance, full of swinging rhythm and grace. But these three movements are, after all, merely a prelude to the last, which resolves itself into a fugue that is truly Olympian, almost outreaching the bounds of human thought. Its triumphant working out of contrapuntal difficulties Geopp has said is enough to give Bach the headache.

Mozart's optimism has nowhere found nobler expression than in this great work; yet it was composed at a time of wretched poverty and dejection. A desperate letter, written to a friend shortly before, begs for a loan and speaks of gloomy thoughts that he must repel with all his might. The symphony is one of three, written within six weeks, during the Summer of 1788, three years before his death. He was then 32 years of age. The oft-recurring illness of his wife kept his mind racked with distress. He was in Vienna, by order of the Emperor, who, in cold-blooded irony, had just assigned him the duty of composing dances for the imperial balls at a salary of 800 gulden—$400 per annum—"too much for what I produce, too little for what I could produce," Mozart said bitterly. Yet as he once remarked, "I never fail to do my best, and to do so with all my strength. Well, God will make all things right."

It is pleasant to chronicle the fact that surprises are to the fore nowadays in pupils' recitals, which are no longer after one stereotyped pattern, but show individuality and art in programme-making. Close upon the heels of the Hidden recital comes one by E. O. Spitzner. The invitations will soon be out, and the probability is that none will be declined. The programme is to be made up of two parts, the first embracing numbers by the pupils, while the second will be devoted to chamber music. Two quintets, one by Sant-Saens, the other by Dvorak, will be given by five of our most highly esteemed artists—the Spitzner-Konrad quartet, assisted by Miss C. L. Huggins at the piano. This organization is an unfamiliar one to Portland audiences. It comprises E. O. Spitzner, first violin; Mrs. John Pipes, second violin; Emil Thielhorn, viola, and Ferdinand Konrad, 'cello. The recital will take place early in January, and promises to be an event of more than ordinary interest.

Another opportunity to enjoy the strong work of the chorus that Mr. Boyer has gathered together will be given the people of Portland this afternoon, at the Taylor-Street M. E. Church, where Gaul's "Holy City" is to be given. The soloists are to be Miss Lawler, soprano; Mrs. Farnsworth, contralto; Mr. Belcher, tenor, and Mr. Epping, baritone. These will be supported by a chorus of 70 voices, and an orchestra of 25 pieces, further reinforced by W. M. Elliott at the harp and Mrs. W. E. Thomas at the organ. G. M.

BEHIND SCENES AT GRAU OPERA.

Supers Pay 50 Cents Each for Privilege of Carrying Spears.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 2.—Among the late society stunts in San Francisco, supping at grand opera seems to take the lead. The fad was started by college students who wanted to see the opera cheaply, and who were given the privilege of standing in the wings, when not carrying spears, at 50 cents a head. Now Stage Manager Rigo, on coming down for chorus drill in the morning, is confronted by a line at the stage door as long as that at the boxoffice, and sells his supers' checks like hot-cakes at $1 each. When it is considered that general admission to the auditorium is only $2, and the Charley, the red-handed pirate who gives out the costumes, expects his little tip, the super does not get off so cheaply after all. Moreover, there is always more or less confusion behind the scenes to mar one's enjoyment of the orchestra, and peep holes are so scarce that only a fortunate few get to see the acting—nor is acting pretty at close range. And the super when on the stage is relegated to the background.

However, the super does have the advantage over the man in the audience in one very important particular, he has the privilege of meeting the most famous artists in the operatic world face to face. They may not know it, but he recalls the fact with great satisfaction. Perhaps, some of the incidents will be stories for their grandchildren.

It is a fascinating world back of the footlights, scene shifters scurrying along with big flats, the men away up in the flies lowering this or that drop or border in response to commands, the lime-light men testing their apparatus, the supe captain drilling his charges and the orchestra strumming as if impatient for the leader. And the grand opera stage is an enormous thing, large enough to maneuver a battalion of infantry on, with five stories height to the top of the fly gallery. The singers, too, add interest, with a little bit of acting, snatches of song or cadenzas. The mixture of costumes, a prince of the old times speaking with an employe in overalls and a hickory shirt, or a gentleman in evening clothes and top-hat passing a word with a medieval shepherdess, makes it at times seem like some strange masquerade.

But beside mere interest in the opera itself, the management of the affair is a marvel of organization. Every "boss" knows his part to the smallest detail, and has drilled those under him to act promptly and accurately, from orchestra to scene shifters. In all the apparent confusion between acts, everything goes like clockwork. The company has its own men who oversee everything, carpenters, mechanics, painters, seamstresses and such. It is not improbable that Grau carries with him as much canvas as does a three-ring circus, for every scene in his big repertoire has a separate setting, and no detail among the properties is too small to be omitted. Any opera is worth seeing just for its mounting alone. In all the big marching scenes, as in "Faust" or "Aida," hundreds of supers and of the chorus, some mounted on horses, give a magnificent effect. All mechanical devices, such as Lohengrin's swan, are perfect in their way. All of this gives some idea why the company cannot afford to stop at places for short stands.

Grau's chorus is worthy of a little comment by itself. It can sing, and it can act, but the members individually look like a lot of caricatures out of the comic papers. Most of them are Italian, and the rest German, with a few French. With the exception of the ballet, this chorus is the homeliest collection of men and women ever seen in San Francisco. The signors look like pirates out of a job, and rather picturesque, but the signorinas—they cannot be described, they must be seen. Yet they have the voices. It is interesting to watch the chorus at work behind the scenes. One man has his eye to a hole in a flat, giving the tempo from the leader of the orchestra, which is taken up by the chorus master, and he, score in hand, brings in his people grouped about the organ.

Opera singers have the name of being very haughty and imperious in every-day life, and extremely so behind the scenes, or at least of being nervous and excitable at such times—which seems to be a wholly mistaken and unjust notion. It is a curious commentary on human nature that in the Grau those who make any offensive show of authority are none of the singers, but the stage hands recruited from the local "South-of-Market." The artists are all good fellows with the chorus, and are loved and respected in return. Bispham, probably the most finished actor in the company, enjoys talking with the chorus and supers, while waiting his cue. Blass, who, off the stage, impresses one as a big, healthy boy, is easy of approach, and Ed de Reszke, an enormous fellow by the way, is much the same. So with most all the men. They are natural and unaffected gentlemen. Mme. Schumann-Heink is a remarkably handsome woman, rather stout but dignified, and has hair of wonderful auburn red. Eames is the most beautiful woman in the troupe, if not on the operatic stage, a beauty that not even grease-paint can harm at near view, and no one blames her for hurrying to her dressing-room under the wing of her maid to avoid the stares of the supers. And Gadsky, never failing through sickness or caprice, is the general favorite of the San Franciscans, not only as an artist, but as a kind and philanthropic lady. But Calve has aroused the most interest of all, this season. Sybil Sanderson was expected to be her rival as an attraction, being a Californian, but she proved a failure, in spite of local booming. Calve, however, has heightened expectations by failing to appear after many announcements; then again retiring for some days after one performance. Her sickness has been a great loss to Grau, and there are tales of a big wine bill at the Cliff House—but this is gossip. The Carmen of Calve is a little disappointing in some ways. It is not as magnetic as her reputation warrants one to expect, but it is the work of an artist. And perhaps the public has had its taste perverted by seeing too much of another Carmen, Signorina Collamarini, who came here with an ill-fated Italian troupe two years ago and has sung at the Tivoli Grand opera-house since. Collamarini is a fascinating Carmen, sings well and acts better, but gives a decided dare-devil and off-color touch to the part, which is probably the thing that makes her so popular with the masses. Indeed, some of her tricks savor of the "tenderloin." Calve plays it with the languorous grace of Spain, every movement a marvel even to opening of a fan. Some of her surprises are in the fact that she is so Spanish. She is capricious, insolent, tender or furious, but without a touch of sensuality in her acting. She is not so beautiful on the stage, but is fully as attractive as they say.

There are many funny incidents at the supers' expense happening behind the scenes, some that come near marring a performance. The costumes are given out regardless of size, and the wearers have to trade around to get a fit. Sometimes, however, a big man may be fairly bursting in a small coat, while a little chap may fall heir to a pair of slippers that he has to lash on with string. Most of the supers have also a knack of putting their costumes on hind side before or some such matter, but they are inspected, fortunately, before allowed to appear. At a performance recently Mr. Bispham happened to notice a group of knights with the neck piece of their round tin helmets turned to the front. "Here, boys, change around those helmets," he shouted, "they are no d—d jockey caps." These voiceless actors cause the management a good deal of annoyance by crowding into the wings, but are promptly fired out for their trouble.

One's first view of the great opera singers is apt to be a disappointment. They seem too like us ordinary mortals to cause so much stir in the world, and in the papers particularly. Perhaps the popular articles about them are overdrawn. Nor is their singing up to expectation. It is only after hearing ordinary talent that one appreciates the difference. The big singers do put an awful amount of strength into their work, their faces are distorted and sweat stands out on their foreheads, yet there is nothing forced in the sound of the notes, which float to the farthest corners of the big auditorium, soft or robust according to the expression. It is this extraordinary carrying force of the voice that strikes one as so wonderful, for a loud voice may not carry to any distance at all with ordinary singers. The super, perhaps, has his ideals shattered in meeting the singers so closely—but it is only another turn to the old saying, that no operatic artist is a hero to his supernumeraries.

The Aeolian Recital.

On last Wednesday evening the usual large audience at the Aeolian recitals listened to a "variegated" programme of unusual interest. The programme was especially prepared with a view of gratifying individual taste, and was a decided success, as was manifested by the close attention paid each selection. Those who were not at last Wednesday's recital missed a rare treat by not hearing the selection, "Vorspell," from Wagner's "Parsifal." For years any selection from this opera was never heard outside of Bayreuth, Germany, as Wagner would not permit the score to be played elsewhere, and it is only recently it was permitted in this country. The above selection on the Aeolian Orchestrelle, rendered by Mr. Wells, was indeed a treat, and was heartily appreciated by all in attendance. The balance of the programme was made of selections from Dvorak, Weber, Liszt, Spindler and Wallace, and was well received, as was shown by various comments expressed by the audience at the completion of the programme.

Sang in Pendleton.

Mrs. Walter Reed has just returned from Pendleton, where she took part in the Elks' memorial service, singing three numbers—"Abide With Me" (Liddle), "Prayer" (Goddard), and "Absent"—which were greatly praised and elicited a very complimentary notice from the East Oregonian.

A Violin Virtuoso Here.

Mr. F. Victor Austen, a violin virtuoso, has become a permanent resident of Portland in the commercial field. Having been soloist with orchestras at Paris, Brussels and the Crystal Palace, London, England, and possessing an extended repertoire, he will prove a valuable addition to Portland musical circles. It is hoped his business occupation will not prevent the public from enjoying his work as a musician.

The pupils of Marie Soule will give a piano recital at Foresters' Hall, 328½ Washington street, Wednesday evening, December 18.

RULES FOR BILLPOSTERS.

Regulations of the French Government Are Exceedingly Strict.

Chicago Chronicle.

In view of the fact that the billboard has become a crying evil in many American cities, it may be interesting to know how they and those who use them are regulated in France. The law of that country applies to billposters, distributors, signtackers and painters. It provides:

"The landlord, usufructary of tenant in chief, has always the right to oppose any posting on his house, and he can take down all posters placarded without his permission.

"All placarding done knowingly of posters which do not contain the names, profession and address of the author and printer is punished by imprisonment of from six days to six months. This punishment is reduced to a fine if the printer's name be disclosed.

"If the contents of the poster incite to crime or misdemeanor, if they be contrary to morality, the distributors, printers or authors will be punished with a fine of from 16 to 500 francs, imprisoned from one to 12 months, and the confiscation of the posters.

"No private individual may placard posters on public monuments or on places destined to receive official posters. Penalty, 100 francs. Posting is not allowed on walls or buildings bearing the legend 'Stick no bills.'"

Painted posters have been the object of special provisions. The financial law of July 8, 1852, provides that every poster displayed in a public place, on the walls, upon any construction or even on a band of calico or other stuff by means of painting or any other process shall be subjected to a tax fixed at 50 centimes for posters measuring one square meter, 39 square inches, and a tax of one franc for a poster larger than one square meter.

Any person who wishes to make use of this kind of billposting must first of all obtain official permission. He has to pay the tax at the registration office of the district where the posters are to be placed. The tax is levied upon the presentation of a declaration containing, first, the wording of the poster; second, names, profession and address of those in whose interest the poster is to be displayed and of the firm undertaking the posting; third, the size of the poster; fourth, number of posters to be placarded; fifth, a statement of the streets and places where the posters are to be displayed.

A School in Nakhl, Arabia.

Geographical Journal.

During my stay at Nakhl I visited some of the schools, of which there are five here, and saw the children imbibing instruction in the usual Moslem style, repeating aloud sentences of the Koran or rules of grammar read out by the mollah. They attend in the morning, and may be seen at an early hour hurrying to school, boys and girls together, some with a "minfa," or wooden Koran stand, on their heads, some with a painted board or camel shoulder-blade, on which they learn to write, under their arm. The instruction given is of a very elementary character—reading, writing, Arabic grammar, the Koran, and a little arithmetic being the only subjects. But the boys of the learned and wealthy are often educated at home by a mollah, and advanced further. The lack of method is partly compensated for by the precocity and tenacity of memory shown by the boys. Nakhl deserves attention for the comparatively advanced state of education among the people, there being a larger proportion of persons in this town able to read and write than in any other in Oman. There is a good number, also, of professional scribes. Books, consequently, are not so scarce here as elsewhere. The higher position of learning here is attributed to the influence of the Persians, who occupied this part of the country during the time of Nadir Shah.

"The Moon! The Moon!"

Louise Betts Edwards in the Independent.

O foolish baby! what—"the moon?"
Life's vainest longing waked so soon?
Your ball is round, your bells are bright;
Both close to touch as well as sight.
The moon's a great, cold, empty thing;
It will not bounce, it will not ring.
For ages it has hung on high,
To tempt poor bye-low babes to cry.
Go bye-low, baby; close your eyes—
What! whimpering to the same old tune—
"The moon! the moon! the moon!"

O wisest baby, to want the moon!
Life's subtlest lesson learned so soon!
When sawdust dolls and trampled toys
Have shattered all our baby joys—
Unspoiled, unbroken, unattained,
By feverish fingers unprofaned,
The lovely moon still swings on high,
That self-respecting babes may cry.
It keeps us looking to the sky,
When we have pricked our last balloon—
"The moon! the moon! the moon!"

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