



GERTRUDE RENNISON AS ELIA
IN "LOHENGGRIN"
COMING TO THE MARQUAN

LOUIS JAMES had just come in at the Portland Hotel with his wife (stage name, Miss Aphie James), from a long walk in the strange winter sunshine of this city.

He received me in his apartments, and we three had a delightful talk.

There is no one around whose words about the theater and theatrical affairs generally should have more influence than the talk of Louis James. And, furthermore, he is a most engaging talker. Mrs. James looks like a young girl, but she says that they have been married 12 years, and I never doubt a woman's word.

Time and the flow of years rest lightly on James' shoulders. He is hale and hearty, and declares that he has missed only 10 performances in 12 years' life on the stage—and so rehearsals whatever.

"That is a pretty good record, isn't it," queried the man of many moons and sterling traditions.

He had been enjoying a visit with his boon companions, Mr. Fred V. Holman and Mr. C. J. Reed, of this city, and they had filled him up with enthusiasm regarding Portland and the marvelous growth of our city and state. James fairly glowed with Reed-Holman hot air.

"The first time I played here was in 1882," continued the handsome man with ruddy cheeks and curly, iron-gray hair. "I was with Lawrence Barrett then, and we played over a market on Washington street. The Marquam building and theater were all in your mind's eye, then. We played to a dollar top price in those days, and we played a week at a stretch. Everybody went to the theater—everybody and all their relatives and their friends and acquaintances. This was always a good show town. We did 'Richelleu,' 'Merchant of Venice'—the standbys, you know; full repertoire, changing the bill each night. Those were busy days; yes, happy days—ha-ha-happy days—as the boomer in the 'Sho-Gun' says.

"I've been coming here ever since, with others, and now by myself. J. J. Coleman is my manager, and I am relieved of all that sort of responsibility. Booth, Barrett and a few of the really great, made their records and wielded a broad influence. While the stage has developed along many and diverse lines, and a wide multitude of miscellaneous and more or less trivial excursions have grown up about it, there are a few of us still left who try to maintain a steadfast effort to follow the legitimate drama—the classics.

"Mansfield, conspicuously, is in this limited coterie. The eminently fitting and artistic union of Sothorn and Miss Marlowe is bringing to the public a series of beautifully presented exhibitions of what is best today on the stage. And, in my own humble way, I am endeavoring to do what I can to remain steadfast to the traditions and excellencies of the standard plays that I have long played in and love with all my heart.

"OF COURSE, my art and my work are very dear to me. It is my whole life. I do not care to criticize the frivolities of stage productions—the mere-

tricious forms of so-called musical comedy and nonsensical farce, the insane monstrosities that usurp so much attention. I think there is a salutary trend generally toward better things. Certainly, managers are compelled in a way, to give the public what it wants. If they did not do so, they would become bankrupt.

"But when you see the really good plays, and the really good specimens of musical comedy making the biggest hits, and pleasing the public most, then you can begin to believe that there are better things coming. Such is the case just now, and I think I see the handwriting on the wall. I remember, not so long ago, a beautiful little musical gem that was put on in New York which included in its cast De Wolf Hopper, Marion Manola and appropriate associates in excellence. Why, I think I never heard such enthusiasm before or since. The people simply devoured it. That is the tendency now. When a genuine musical piece, with an understandable plot, carrying a string of melody that fits and beautifies—that is to say, when the opera, or operetta, or opera bouffe, what you will—has a reason for being, some continuity, and is essentially artistic instead of leaning toward the perfunctory grotesque, then the public instantly responds and the biggest hit is scored.

"Similarly, the dramas of finer quality are holding their own, and every time a worthy play is written and produced, the sure judgment of the dependable portion of the public accepts it with unerring precision and an unqualified success is recorded. I note this eventful guaranty that the conditions are becoming better rather than worse for the immediate and certain recognition of real merit in theatrical productions. And I believe it means a good omen for the future of the stage. The public taste, although tried and doctored variously, is, in the main, becoming healthy. At least, there is a large underlying element that has its source in the perennial fountain of human nature which can never fail to espouse the cause of true and meritorious art. While I have always used the classic channels which were blazed before me by tried men who won their spurs, and my life has been a joy in this effort, I am catholic enough to enjoy all else that rings true, and my seat in it is as strong as it always was. Take Robert Edson in that lovely play of 'Strongheart.' Nothing could be more true and moving. To see a play like that is to undergo an experience of pleasure and benefit.

"THE profession overcrowded? Well, yes, I suppose it is. But what will you? The interest in the theater seems to be growing rather than diminishing. Its beauties, and its charms, and its reported financial inducements, coupled with the desire for fame, do not appear to act as preventive forces among the multitudinous crop of stage aspirants, both male and female. God speed and help them all!"

Mr. James looked placid and contented.

His stage career has had some thorns, but for decades has led among embowered lanes among the roses. Now, even his manager bears the monetary responsibilities. Again, I suspect, that attractive and talented woman of vivacity and comeliness, his wife, contributes much to his inordinate share of the good things of this life, and the pleasant places in which he passes his time.

"Next year I intend to make a change and include some comedy in my repertoire. We shall put forth 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' I playing Falstaff. The privilege of 'Jefferson' it will be taken—that is, condensing and eliminating, so that certain scenes may be given as one act, thus avoiding a cumbersome framework and making the play far better, in my opinion, adapted to the uses of today. We shall also produce 'A Fool's Revenge,' using the version William Winter prepared for Edwin Booth."

James never fails to score a point when he encounters a passage of comedy in any role that he portrays. There is ample promise that this announced addition of comedy roles to his repertoire will be largely to the ascendancy and the gratification of his audiences. He has certainly shone brightly, as a tragedian. And he most assuredly was born with that ineffable and elusive something in his spiritual composition that acts like champagne bubbles to stimulate our fancies. He has humor in him of the genuine sort.

DEVOTEES of the effervescent and translucent musical burlesque have had a heady week of it at the Baker Theater. The tide of fun and sparkle has been running swiftly with an undiminished pace. The opinion has been expressed by those who know that in all the season there has not been a more sweetly demure and bewitching assortment of tightheaded good-bye last night. The whole town has applauded that the show this week was one to which one could take one's sister, or even one's sedate spinster aunt, without a blush. The hilarity and the polyglot of jokers embodied in the entertainment, the musical tunefulness, the colorful atmosphere of extravaganzas, have all had their share in making up a speedy and a breezily humorous week.

MISS AILEEN MAY at the Empire has acquired the distinction of making Portland take her in dead earnest. I know few voices better calculated than hers to touch the emotions. She has been trained in the melodramatic fly-by-night circuits, and she bears the traditions of the people who raise their hands and voice and appeal to the gallery. But I perceive in her that reserve and quiet dignity of feeling that certainly can be used to reach the favor and appreciation of countless thousands of the public if rightly wielded by an intellect that she may have. It all depends upon her soul and her intellect. If her soul is expansive enough, and if her intellect is far-reaching and quick enough, she has beauty to match and the threat to sound clarion notes, that will help her astoundingly to rush up the ladder of fame. This city has become progressively interested in the company at the Empire Theater which is led by Miss May. They are evolving melodramas as she really is liked in the provinces, they are throwing in some farce that is homely and beautiful, and they are going to stay another week at the same stand. I'll be there half the time, because I want to get some real thrills and some real laughs.

ON the top notch of importance, apparently, in circles of writers on dramatic affairs in the East, Bernard Shaw continues to stand. John R. Towse, William Winter, James Huneker, John Corbin, Alan Dale—scarcely a man lack of the entire coterie of celebrated commentators on the drama—fails to load his current contributions with copious mention and discussion of the attributes and idiosyncrasies of this famous Celt. Mr. Bernard Shaw, whose essays and whose plays have set the modern world afire. Many of us have seen some of the Shaw plays. Many of us understand him as the cleverest and most brilliant fooler of known times. All of us



JOSE CARVER WITH
WATSON'S
ORIENTALS
AT THE
EMPIRE

are interested in so strange and attractive a personality. That his works are stimulating beyond measure, there is no gainsaying. The point in question seems to be to trace the intended motive behind his immensely diverting activity, and to fix the merit of his achievements. It is settled that he is sincerely sincere, and that all his productions may safely be judged by that standard. Now at last the most stunning summing up of him is made in a partial quotation by John Corbin, the masterful critic of the New York Sun. Mr. Corbin says that all Shaw's stuff, his effusions and influence, are all "blooming gaseous folly"—a phrase of literary genius. A. K. BALLARD.

WATSON'S ORIENTALS.

Famous Comedian, W. B. Watson and Burlesque Company at Baker.

W. B. Watson, the well-known and popular comedian, presents the above company, which is called an extravaganza, being composed of three distinct and varied styles of entertainment, skillfully combined in one show. It is a creation of Mr. Watson's, and, according to his long-cherished conception, should prove a success. The aim is to make all acts good and no one act to dominate it. Each part and each performer are placed fittingly according to the general plan, everything thus proceeding without friction, and so compelled to proceed or be promptly discovered and thrown out. Many theatrical organizations are ruined by the domination of individual performers, with bad cases of swelled heads, but not so this; yet, with this company the performer is appreciated according to his full value and treated accordingly. A theatrical enterprise succeeds in these days by force of its merits, and not otherwise, and it is surprising how the real nature of a show is now known in advance.

Thus it is that the "Orientals," the notable entertainment now on the road in the name of W. B. Watson, and created wherever it goes, but gathers force, in the talent sense, as it proceeds, with each engagement. The musical contingent that forms one of the many variety of shows given is claimed to be the most perfect of its kind; the vaudeville acts are performed by some of the best-known stars in the profession. The comedy element is in the hands of the well-known Billy Watson. Costumes, scenery, electrical effects are carried and a perfect performance in every respect is promised.

"Watson's Orientals" will open at the Baker with today's matinee, and continue for the regular six nights and three matinees closing with the Saturday matinee performance. The popular bargain matinee, will, of course, be given as usual on Wednesday.

MAMMOTH ENTERTAINMENT.

Grand Concert and Monster Vaudeville Night at the Marquam.

Seats are now being sold by the individual members of the Musical Mammoth Association, together with the leading stores in the city, for the grand concert and monster vaudeville entertainment to be given at the Marquam Grand Theater, Wednesday evening, January 31. The proceeds of this entertainment will go into the treasury of this organization, which is composed of nearly 300 professional musicians in the city. An orchestra of 50 musicians, under the direction of Edgar E. Courten, will play the famous "William Tell" overture by Rossini; together with several other numbers both classic and popular. Mrs. Walter Reed, Portland's favorite contralto, and Mrs. Rose Bloch Bauer, Portland's favorite soprano, will be heard in their most charming selections. Frank Richter, the blind boy pianist, will add to the evening's pleasure with one of his artistic solos. Five "top-line" vaudeville acts will be given by the most charming selection. The kind assistance of the managers of the different vaudeville houses in the city. This will, no doubt, prove to be one of the most popular entertainments ever given in this city. Seats may also be had at the box office of the Marquam Grand Theater. Tickets can be exchanged for reserved seats at the

Marquam Theater, beginning Monday, January 29.

TAYLOR COMPANY RETAINED

Second Week at the Empire in "The Little Church Around the Corner."

The Taylor Company is popular, and justly so, for its members give performances with a finish and surety that impresses the auditor at once. They have added to their previous good name during the past week and the management of the Empire has gone to special pains to retain them for a second and farewell week. Their offering will be Marion Russell's beautiful life picture, "The Little Church Around the Corner." It calls for the full acting force known heretofore and the additional appearance of Little Edith Raymore, a diminutive and precocious little miss, who has not been seen in an important role in this city. "The Little Church Around the Corner" deals with Agnes Miller, who loves and

nounced for the week after "The Little Church Around the Corner" at the Empire, starting next Sunday matinee, January 21. It is a comedy-drama, the scenes of which are laid in the metropolis. It portrays every phase of life in Gotham from the dwellers in the mansions of Riverside Drive to the denizens of the squalid slums of the Ghetto. The entire production is a feast for the eye, from a scenic standpoint, and a vein of delightful comedy, interspersed with many pleasing specialties makes a contrast to the darker side of the picture.

Miner's "Americans."

Miner's "Americans" will open at the Baker for the week following "Watson's Orientals." A two-act musical farical diversion entitled "A Yankee Doodle Girl," by Barney Gerard, is presented by the entire company. The play abounds with clever comedy, beautiful scenery and elaborate costumes; the electrical effects are said to be a revelation between the two acts. An olio of first-class talent is

patrons by putting on nothing but the best acts available. Quality has been the aim of the management and the cost has not been taken into consideration. One act on the present bill, the Rolio Troupe, cost the management exactly \$500 for the week's work. The other features are of an equally high order, and if you have not seen the bill, take advantage of today's last opportunity.

The new bill for the ensuing week will open tomorrow afternoon with a list of features in every way up to the order of amusements that have been provided by the house from the first. Heading the new bill is the Weber family, possibly the greatest family of acrobats and gymnasts in the country if not in the world. They accomplish all manner of difficult feats with astounding ease. Fear and Flood have a comedy sketch act which terms with wholesome fun. What many will regard as the feature of the show is the Golden Gate quartet, four sweet-voiced singers who sing old familiar songs as well as the very latest. This will prove an innovation to vaudeville patrons who favor good vocal music. Meadows and Lassare are a team of fun-makers with a long record for jollying audiences into good humor. Arnelio, equilibrist and ballerina, is one of the cleverest in his following. Leo White will sing a new illustrated ballad, "The City of Signs and Tears," and a striking set of moving pictures will be shown on the biograph. The same bill will be shown all week, with a matinee and two night performances daily.

ANNIE ABBOTT AT THE STAR

Georgia Magnet Heads the New Programme, Beginning Tomorrow.

Every Sunday the performance at the Star are continuous from 2:30 to 10:45, and that will be the rule today, when the final appearance of Tony Ryder's wonderful educational monkeys will be made. These animals are the acme of animal intelligence and are as funny as possible. They are a show in themselves.

Commencing tomorrow with the matinee, the Star will present a new vaudeville programme and offer as its star attraction that little Georgia magnet, Miss Annie Abbott.

This strange woman appeared at the Grand a few months ago and completely mystified the people of Portland with her strange performance. She is the only one in the world successfully attempting these feats, and the scientists of Europe and America have endeavored to solve the problem. Without straining a muscle, Miss Abbott is able to lift several men and half a dozen strong men, selected at random from the audience, are unable to lift her from the floor unless she is willing. A stick of wood, a table or a chair



LITTLE EDITH RAYMORE
IN
"LITTLE CHURCH
AROUND THE
CORNER"
AT THE
EMPIRE



THE WONDERFUL MECHANICAL PULL
PHILOS AT THE GRAND



"THE ROLLOPS"
FEATURE AT
PANTAGES

presented. Among those who appear are Joe Goodrich, Fisher and Clark, May Butler, and, as an added feature, the phenomenal and sensational melodramatic moving picture, "The River Pirate."

GOOD ACTS AT PANTAGES.

Popular Playhouse Provides Feature Acts for the New Week.

Today for the last time the great bill which Pantages has had on all week will be presented to the public. Crowded houses have been the order all week and the various acts have won with the greatest popular favor. Pantages has already won the confidence of local vaudeville

clings to her hands just as a nail does to a horseshoe magnet. No one knows what is the character of this strange power, as there has never been a satisfactory explanation given.

The Roberts Four, popular performers in vaudeville, will present their successful playlet, "The Dollmaker's Dilemma," during which songs and dances are introduced. DeVore Brothers, equilibrist, from Europe, are billed to do some sensational feats in the balancing line, and the Rolioes are contortionists and legman who perform a style different from anything you have yet seen. McHenry Brothers are singers, dancers and comedians, and have much new material. Mr. Hartford will sing a new illustrated ballad, and the

COMING ATTRACTIONS.

"Hooligan in New York."

"Hooligan in New York" is an