



At the Marquam this week, the James Neill Company has produced four pieces that have brought considerable pleasure to the lovers of light dramatic work.

In the matter of classification of plays, the critic has some difficulty to establish a standard and conform to it. A play may come to town that is in every respect up to reasonable requirements, and yet that does not warrant extravagant praise for the reason that it does not support to be of the very highest dramatic value.

It is not necessary to "roast" a piece in order to indicate its real merit. Absence of positive statement to that effect would be taken by the intelligent reader as the same as saying that it is not of the highest class of dramas, that is of the highest that are called "the legitimate." The legitimate, as we take it, is the play that combines all of the component elements of the ideal drama, produced in a manner to bring the actor up to the standard of the playwright.

The Neills in their Marquam productions, and previously in Portland, have been worthy of high praise for their conscientious work, for the absolute cleanliness of their plays, for the merit of their light comedy, yet no one would attempt to claim that they are of the highest class of artists.

This is not to depreciate the company. They deserve to play to capacity houses next week. They are worthy patronage, such as they have not yet had. They are practically solving the problem of elevating the stage, for they present nothing that does not attain to the proper ethical requirements. They are a feature of Portland's winter series of plays.

The appearance of Miss Keller, of the Neills at the Marquam, has been a genuine surprise to all. Miss Keller has before her a future of such a character to turn her head as she contemplates it, unless she possess the good sense to take praise in this instance as recognition of what she may some day do if she work work and devotion to duty will bring her fame as an 'ingenue. Indeed, she may yet become an actress of first-class standing, if she work, study, toil, and learn that the genius of work is what has made the great men and women great.

The balance of merit in the James Neill Company has been noted by all who have seen them. All of the members deserve to be mentioned for excellent acting, and the stage arrangements of the local manager, Mr. Heilig, have been distinct features of the engagement.

The Neill Stock Company really deserves the most laudatory notices for their work in "Lady Windermere's Fan," at the Baker this week. The play has been handled with a conscientious attention to details, that leaves no opportunity to allege that the stars are good and the remainder of the company mediocre. The stars are good, and the company throughout is cast with excellent taste.

With elegant scenic investiture and costuming, the production is open to little criticism. "Lady Windermere's Fan" calls for a delicate finish that no ordinary or mediocre company of people can ever attain, and yet its every requirement has been fully realized and many people saw the play for the second time.

At the Cordray theater the offering of the week has been "A Broken Heart" by Esther Rajaró, and "A Thoroughbred Tramp." Both had good business. "Lost in New York" is next week's bill. This is to be a play of some pretensions, especially from the scenic point of view. It will exhibit steel launches, and boats and all sorts of water craft on the stage. It will also, if the advance announcements are to be credited, be of dramatic merit.

If there have been a few poor things at Cordray's this year, it must also be said that there have been some good ones, and the management has some very excellent productions signed for the season. It must be remembered that thus early in the season it is difficult for Coast theatrical managers to get the best. The better productions are available later in the winter, and some far into the spring. They must be taken when they may be gotten, and it is but fair for the theatergoers to remember that they get what they pay for, and no more. Of course, managers would prefer always to have the most expensive productions. But they must keep in mind the limitations and not offer what Portland can not support. The best things demand so high terms that the local theaters can not find patronage to warrant every time signing them.

For instance, the Mascagni Grand Opera Company's agent was here during the week, and wants a guarantee of \$25,000 for three nights of grand opera, in December, as we understand it. Imagine a local manager guaranteeing \$25,000 for any three-night engagement! Yet, if they demand \$25,000, they will, if they come, receive nearly that much and therefore there must be some very heavy risks taken by someone in making the guarantee.

Portland would like to have the Mascagni here. Would they be willing to pay for them?

BY MR. HEILIG.

Announcing "Under the Red Robe" and Other Plays Next Week. James Neill will begin the farewell week of his engagement in this city at the Marquam-Grand Monday evening, with the first presentation here of Edward E. Ross's dramatization of Stanley Weyman's great romantic novel, "Under the Red Robe." This famous play will be

given Monday, Tuesday evenings and at the Saturday matinee.

The story of the play tells of Gil de Berault, a Parisian gambler and bravo, who has the reputation of having done many men to death in duels, finds at last his life is forfeited to the Cardinal Richelieu, autocrat of things temporal and spiritual. As a means of redeeming his life from the impending penalty the bravo consents to play the spy for the crafty cardinal, go to Cocheferre in the Pyrenees, win the confidence of a woman in order to learn the secret, and betray her family to the vengeance meted out to rebels.

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Members of The Neill Stock Company



LILLIAN RHOADES.



Robert Siddle.



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Nina Gleason.

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New York's Theatres

NEW YORK, September 20.—The theatrical season opens with an easy and natural swing in New York, and the building of new theatres presages a happy result to our enterprising managers.

The Broadway season opened at the Garrick theater with "The New Clown," a three-act farce by H. M. Paul. It is one of Charles Frohman's new importations from London, where it had a long and successful run at Terry's and the Comedy theatre. This bright farce was very favorably received by a large audience. The hero is a young nobleman who adopts the role of a clown in order to escape the police, who are trying to arrest him for the supposed drowning of a friend.

There is plenty of fun and good love making in "The New Clown." Complications are brought about by the infatuation of the hero for the equestrienne, at whom the strong man of the sawdust folks has already set his cap.

Season Opens With Managers Looking for Good Business During the Coming Winter.

oughly overhauled to make room for a big production of it. Prominent among the beauties in the cast is Miss Fenton Stewart, whose picture accompanies this article.

Klaw & Erlanger's new theatre will open with the new Drury Lane spectacle "Blue Beard," which will overtop even "Ben Hur."

The Rodgers Brothers in Harvard are at the Knickerbocker under the same management.

The Greenwall Stock Company opens the season at the American with "The Christian," and Lillian Bayer has a strong part in the cast.

This will be followed by a very clever selection of first class productions which will be used in their various houses throughout the country.

The Empire opens with John Drew's play "The Mummy and Humming Bird." There is an odd character in this novelty, an old Italian organ-grinder who has come to London to slay the man who stole his wife. John Drew chief in the play and engages the old Italian as his valet. In this capacity the old man prevents the elopement of the scientist's wife with the very man who had dishonored his own home.

HERBERT E. CLAMP. Hay Fever Theories.

Some recent scientific investigations on the subject in Germany have not added very much to our knowledge as to the causes of the disease or the most effectual remedy. A great many different theories are advanced by patients as to the origin in their own cases. One lady declared that she caught hay fever whenever she happened to think of it, while another said an attack would be brought on by thinking of a cornfield. A third patient asserted that it would be produced if cats came into the room; one has heard before of the sight of a cat bringing on a fainting fit, and some hypersensitive persons attributed a swoon to the smell of a rose. The rather generally received opinion that the pollen of flowers is the cause of hay fever is not confirmed by Dr. Thost's experiments. The doctor is, unfortunately, unable to propound an effectual cure. There is a prophylactic, indeed, but some people would think the remedy as bad as the disease. It is to live in a place where there is no vegetation. On that account the island of Heligoland is much resorted to by German sufferers. There are spots on our own coast where the condition is tolerably well fulfilled, and in any case it may be said that people who habitually suffer from hay fever should take their holidays at the seaside rather than in the country.—London Globe.

Children of the Poor. Prof. E. Benjamin Andrews declares that parentage among the poor should be discouraged.

This is a good enough theory to create a sensation, but beyond that end it has no merit whatever.

Had this theory been in force, the world would have had no Lincoln, no Franklin, no Shakespeare, no Homer, no Spenser.

Poverty is no obstacle to character-building; it is a positive help. Early toil becomes a fixed habit and deprivation teaches, soul-deep, the divine lessons of wholesome aspiration and self-denial.

The elder Rothchild, the elder Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Cyrus W. Field, John W. Mackay and a host of others most eminently capable of self-support were born under unfavorable conditions, if there be such.

The unrestrained breeding of disease and vice is another question, and one of vital importance. But poverty is not hereditary.—Chicago Record-Herald.

To Decorate Women. Ostrich feathers are plucked for market as follows: A man carefully examines the flock and picks out those birds whose feathers are ripening, groups them into dozens and pens them in so that they cannot run about and injure their beautiful plumage. When the plucking time comes each bird is enticed into a narrow, dark passageway. The entrances are then closed and the bird thus imprisoned. A cloth bag is thrown over the creature's head. Then the plucking begins. Three men, perched upon platforms outside of the pen, reach over the board inclosure and with curious scissor-like appliances pluck off the feathers. Whatever wounds a bird may receive are immediately dressed. The tail feathers are pulled and not cut, simply because they reproduce better than other feathers of the ostrich. While the plucking is in progress the ostrich keeps up a dismal roaring. Were it not for the staunch construction of the pen the creature would kick the boards into splinters.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The Bark of a Dog. Strangely enough, barking, which seems to us so characteristic of the dog, is not one of its natural sounds at all. No wild dogs bark, and, what is more remarkable, if dogs are isolated for a long time from their human masters they seem to lose the faculty. Thus a number of dogs turned loose on Juan Fernandez island were found in thirty-three years to have completely lost the habit, but to be able to re-acquire it. On the other hand, wolf puppies, as well as young wild dogs if reared among tame ones, readily learn to bark. It almost seems as if the sound were differentiated from the howling and yelping natural to the wild canine in order to communicate with man and serve his purpose. It is worth observing that the habit can be eliminated when desired, as in some breeds of dogs favored by poachers.

AN UP-TO-DATE NEWSPAPER. The Journal, an acorn of newspapers, for several months, becoming now an oak of newspapers. By carrier, in city, 10 cents a week.

PORTLAND ACADEMY

Boys Enjoy Themselves—Old Multnomah Building in Place.

The boys of the Portland Academy certainly do enjoy themselves after school hours on a vacant block in front of the academy building. A reporter who started out that way yesterday was greatly interested in the antics of the young men.

There were about a score of them out in their football uniforms, going through all kinds of stunts which greatly puzzled the reporter, who knows nothing about football. All of a sudden the boys would rush to a given point and squat down in a cleft with heads to head like a lot of quail on a frosty morning. Then they would break away, as they say in prize ring parlance, and form themselves in a V-shaped squad. A bystander explained to the unsportsmanlike reporter that this was called a flying wedge. They certainly did wedge into those lines up against them, but with the immense amount of padding each wore no one was hurt.

The old Multnomah Club house, which was purchased by the academy, is in place and brickmasons are busily engaged in placing a foundation under the large building. This work will be rapidly completed, and then the carpenters will be turned loose on the interior.

FIFTY CENT WHEAT. Enormous Sales in the Palouse Country That Basis.

COLFAX, Wash., Sept. 20.—Wheat is selling at 50 cents a bushel in the Palouse country, and there is a rush to sell. Only one firm is paying that price, but the local agent is almost buried with wheat offered by the farmers who have been holding for that price. Seymour Manning is the agent here for the Northwestern Warehouse Company, of San Francisco and Portland. He received orders yesterday morning to pay 50 cents for wheat at Palouse country points, and since then his life has been a strenuous one. From the time of receiving the order until 9 o'clock last night he had purchased 202,000 bushels of wheat, every bushel being bought direct from the farmer who raised it. The limit given Mr. Manning was 6 cents at Portland. The freight rate