



TALK OF THE THEATRE.

Sensation upon sensation! Wife for Wife was the last play presented by the Harkins Company. It was boomed as a sensational piece and so it proved to be. A southern scene, southern characters and southern jealousy, the revengeful mulatto, slaves and masters, pistols and knives—it lacked only the blood hounds and the slave driver to give it the realism of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

All the other members of the company in the cast acquitted themselves creditably. Mr. Handysides and Miss Leigh deserving especial mention for their good work. Curiously enough after pointing out last week that the title of Master and Man simply served the purpose of a catch penny, I ran across a book now much advertised bearing the very suggestive title, Six Months in Hades.

Tyrone Power opened his return engagement in the Opera House Monday evening with his new play, The Sins of His Father. The attendance was not up to the mark, the receipts being about \$112.

Next week the Crust of Society will be presented. The play is dramatized from a French novel and if I may judge from the extensive advance notices in the daily press there is something exceedingly naughty about it.

Talk of the Boston Play Houses. Things theatrical are quiet enough just now in the Athens of America, and the critics have not much else to do but sharpen their pencils for next season's work, and for the present enjoy what little is offered, which certainly is not of a very high order.

The Columbia, Grand Opera House, Hollis St., Tremont St., Globe and Boston Museums are all closed, so you see the opera houses are few and catch those who are desirous of being amused in a light and summer-like manner.

The Park Theatre is open and has for the past few weeks given us a musical comedy called "The Golden Wedding." Why the authors alone only know, for the title has about as much to do with the piece as it has with municipal politics.

At the Bowdoin Square, comic opera holds possession, as rendered by the Baker Opera Company and as the people composing the company are well known with you, it only remains for me to say that they give their pieces in fairly good shape and that Irene Murphy and William Wolf have established themselves as favorites.

The Tremont, which has been closed for three weeks, and has been put in summer dress, cane seated chairs, light curtains and all that sort of thing, re-opens on Monday evening with Pauline Hall and her company in the opera "Amorita." The engagement will probably run until the beginning of the regular season, and Miss Hall will also be seen in last season's success "Puritania."

The "Pops" are on and as a matter of course Music Hall is crowded nightly, for you must know it is considered quite the proper thing to drop in for an hour or so to hear the music, quaff a glass of beer and smoke a cigarette. Everybody goes to the Pops, and they are well worth going to, for Mr. Adamowski, the conductor, always furnishes a splendid programme, and one is indeed a stranger in Boston who cannot find an acquaintance during a stroll through

Music Hall. There is considerable discussion now as to the site for a new Music Hall, for the march of progress will ere long sweep the old building out of existence; and if Boston is to have its symphony concerts and its symphony orchestra, she will have to provide a home and an abiding place for them. Doubtless they will be provided, for it would be awful to think of this centre of culture to be without the Symphonies. Shades of Mendelssohn, Mozart et al. forbid. Why the dead and gone masters would revisit this earthly scene, filled with surprise and shame, were such a thing to come to pass, as Boston without a home for its Symphony Orchestra; and besides just think how those wicked unmusical New Yorkers would chuckle with fiendish glee should we, right here in Boston, be unable to lead the world in presenting the works of the great musicians. Heaven forbid!

I see that Harkins is with you and notice that he carries some well known names with him in his company, notably Whitecar and Handysides. Miss Mand Hoffman, who recently played Juliet here—her first appearance on any stage—has signed with E. S. Willard for next season. This young lady is in great luck.

It is late in the day now to say anything about the death of Edwin Booth, or the difficulty in filling his place. I was very much amused at the curt way in which one of your contemporaries disposed of the dead actor; it was done in seven lines and the writer said he was "not a very great actor" and that "as Hamlet he had won much reputation." I thought as I read these few lines, and also read between them, how the writer would have slopped over had Irving died instead of Booth, then nothing would have been fulsome enough in the way of praise, then the stage would have lost an actor whose place would never be refilled. In the general consensus of opinion, even allowing for the usual feeling that prompts speaking nothing but good of the dead, Booth was the greatest actor of his day, and there is no question that his equal as Hamlet, Richelieu, Richard III, Iago or Belphegor does not live, and in the present state of the drama and public taste it will be long and many a day before a fit and worthy successor does appear. Irving is not a great actor; he is among the best, it is not the best stage manager of his time, but as an exponent of the Shakespearean plays he is far and away behind the master who has so recently left us.

Richard Mansfield has joined the colony of California rancho wners that includes Modjeska, Salvini, Fanny Davenport, W. M. Wilkinson, M. B. Curtis, Nellie McHenry and Albert Bruning. He has bought twenty acres.

Ellen Terry lives in a brick house at Earl's Court, with her son and daughter. Pretty surroundings are necessities of life to Miss Terry, and her home is full of quaint nooks and corners, soft harmonies of color, and the delicate fragrance of flowers.

"If I played Camille often I think I should die some time—in the closing scene—and they would find me there dead," said Mrs. Duse one time to a friend. "She does die," the person said, in repeating the story, "temporarily, of course, but it is so real that I believe some time her imagination will carry her too far and she will not revive."

All records are eclipsed by the stage directions of a seventeenth century opera. Freschi's "Berenice," which provide for two lions led by Turks, two more lions led by elephants, a stable containing 100 living horses, and a forest filled with bears, deer, and wild boar! In this connection it is worth recording that at Mme. Patt's benefit in Madrid years ago, scores of canaries were let loose in the auditorium by her enthusiastic admirers.

A Detroit paper has discovered how it was that the gallery occupants have come to be known as gods. The Drury Lane theatre many years ago had its ceiling painted to represent a blue sky with clouds, among which were cupids flying in every direction. This ceiling extended over the gallery and consequently the occupants of these higher seats were said to be "among the gods," while the later term "gallery gods" was applied to those occupying the highest tiers in theatres.

The old way of imitating lightning on the stage by flashing lycopodium powder behind an irregular line cut in the scenery is superseded in Parisian theatres by the use of a long, flexible rod with a brilliant incandescent lamp at the end. The rod is moved quickly down in a zigzag direction at the proper moment. A key controlled by the foot enables the circuit to be made or broken at will. In other theatres the lightning is occasionally flashed against the scene through scratches in a smoked glass from a stereopticon. But, after all, the sudden glare of the flame blown through magnesium or lycopodium powder, at the wings, is about as near to lightning as anything. Its effect in the storm of "Julius Cæsar" as played by the Saxe-Meiningen company is well remembered.

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