

Musical and Dramatic.

TALK OF THE THEATRE.

The Castle Square theatre company, as they style themselves, are at the opera house this week. It has been advertised as a 10, 20, 30 cent show. I don't propose to dispute that. Their season opened with the well known play "The Octoron" to a crowded house. It is some time since a theatrical company has been here. One is therefore quite an attraction if not a real novelty. These facts, together with a liberal use of paper, nearly always have this effect of securing a full house. It reads well, "opened to crowded house." There is not much in it though. The work of the company in their opening play may have been impaired to some extent by heavy colds contracted by some of the performers, but the opinion expressed in this department last week was justified in every particular. They have organized to do the provinces at a cheap rate apparently. The great Orchestral Band of the Castle Square theatre did not arrive, so the citizens were deprived of the pleasure of hearing a concert in front of the house each night by this famous organization. It did not get here. There is no such band. When the Castle Square theatre company gets a number of musicians together to travel with them they may call it their own band but I don't fancy Manager Rose of Boston would feel much complimented. If he saw the "The Octoron" and "Zeppa" given by this company he would at once wire to take proceedings to prevent the name of his house being cheapened. In "The Octoron," which is a play of slavery days there was introduced a clod-hopper Dutchman, who sang (?) and danced. He had no business there. Such individuals did not swarm in the south "before the war." I don't think this company will extend its season in St. John.

Joe Jefferson has been playing "Rip Van Winkle" for the Boston people with unprecedented success. Clarence Handysides who will be remembered here as a member of W. S. Harkins' company of a couple of seasons ago, is a member of Jefferson's company and has been playing the role of Hendrich Vedder.

Most, the anarchist, it is said will appear in a lurid play called "The Sicillienne."

Mrs. Kendall's first appearance on the stage was as a child in "The Poor Traveller."

George Fawcett will be Svengali in the "Tribby" company that will have Sybil Johnstone in the title role. W. A. Brady is manager of this company. Mr. Fawcett is remembered in St. John as a popular member of the Lansdowne theatre company.

On Monday evening next Cissy Loftus (Mrs. Justin Huntley McCarthy) will give one of her characteristic entertainments in Boston music hall. A feature of the evening will be a new one act play, written by her husband entitled "The Highwayman" in which she will appear and in which Mr. Fritz Williams will also play a part.

John Koster, of the well known firm of Koster and Bial, is dead. His death occurred in New York last week.

Miss Ednorah Nahar, well known in this city as a particularly clever reciter, appeared at the Boston Press club benefit last week when she recited W. W. Story's dramatic monologue "Cleopatra." Some of the most clever amateur and professional talent, including Miss Olga Nethersole, took part in the programme.

Beroborn Tree in the role of "Hamlet" is critically noticed in a recent Boston paper which says: "Mr. Tree's Hamlet was certainly a surprise because of its excellence. The performance of Mr. Tree illustrates anew the universality of the character of Hamlet." "Mr. Tree departs from recent productions in a number of things, none of really great moment and most of them without offence. Some of his business is cheap and melodramatic. . . . At no time did Mr. Tree give us a Hamlet that was above the actor's ideal. The artist, who, to the eye and judgment loses himself in this portrayal of this most complex character, was wanting. Mr. Tree's art was almost always in sight. He gave us a Hamlet of sadness—that was its definite attribute."

Speaking of Miss Nethersole, as an actress, a Boston writer says last week: I think most people who have seen Miss Nethersole's work thus far have concluded that she falls short of being a great actress; that she is eccentric in her work, particularly in the "business" of a part; that she plays certain scenes with striking ability, and upon occasions seems to absolutely lose herself in the character. "Her performance of Juliet demonstrated pretty clearly her limitations. Eccentricity of business is foreign to, if not blasphemous of, Shakespeare's heroine. The lines he has given this fair lady to speak were sadly out of tune and clashed with the silly and insane business of the pitter-patter of a spoiled child, that Miss Nethersole gave expression to in the first acts. Indeed she expressed none of the attributes of the Juliet we first see—for Shakespeare's heroine was not a coquette, was not sophisticated as

Miss Nethersole would have us believe—but rather was she natural in all things."

During their five annual tours in America—from 1889 to 1895—Mr. and Mrs. Kendall have presented eighteen plays.

An illustration of the work done by an actor in "days of old" is found in the following interesting biographical sketch of one among the best of them:

Mr. James R. Anderson, who died recently at the age of eighty-six, had passed almost entirely out of living recollection. He was born in 1819, and was, at one time, considered among the most promising of Macready's recruits, occupying for some years a prominent position. He made his debut in London at Covent Garden, then under Macready's management, on September 30, 1837, as Florizel in "The Winter's Tale," and said the Athenian of the following October 7, "won golden opinions for the ease and propriety of his demeanour and delivery." In "The Novice," an unsuccessful piece, he made his next appearance, and on the 23rd of May, 1838, played St. Valentine de Grey in "Woman's Wit, or Love's Disguise," by Sheridan Knowles; and on March 7, 1839, the original De Mauprat in Bulwer's "Richelieu," with Macready, Warde, Phelps, Howe and Helen Faucit in the other leading characters. He remained at Covent Garden under the Matthews and Vestris management, playing Biron in "Love's Labour Lost," Fernando in Knowles's "John of Procida" and Charles Courtney in Boicault's "London Assurance." As Bassanio in "The Merchant of Venice," he opened under Macready at Drury Lane, where he played original parts in Jerrold's "Prisoners of War" and Gerald Griffin's "Gisippus." On the 23rd of May, 1842, he appeared as Othello. Orlando, Captain Absolute, Harry Dorton, Posthumus and Faulconbridge followed. In Browning's "Blot in the Scutcheon" he was the first Merton. In 1843-44 he was with Phelps and Vandenhoff at Covent Garden; and at the Haymarket was (Oct. 20, 1845) the original Claude Melnotte in "The Lady of Lyons." In 1846 he went to America, opening as Othello at the Park Theatre, New York. In 1848 America was revisited. In January, 1850, he began a management of Drury Lane, in the course of which he produced "Ingomar," playing the title role. In his two seasons of management he is said to have lost over £9000. In 1853, and again in 1858 he was in America. In London, subsequently, he played principally at the Standard. In 1863 he played, at the Surrey, Jack Cade in the second part of "King Henry VI." In September, 1873, he played Antony at Drury Lane. From that time he disappears from the stage. He wrote some dramas now wholly forgotten. His strong and portly figure and his thick white hair were long conspicuous at the Garrick Club, at which, however, his marvellously strong and resonant voice was seldom heard, as he was of taciturn disposition. After about fifty years' membership of the club he was no more seen there, an assault for the purpose of robbery between the club and his rooms at the Bedford hotel in Covent Garden, where he died, injuring him so severely as to prevent him stirring forth. He was a tragedian of the declamatory school, with a voice of marvellous power and range.

Robert Mantell, the actor, whose wife secured a divorce, and who was ordered by the court to pay her \$55 per week, alimony, has allowed it to accumulate so that he is now in arrears to the extent of \$3,500. He has asked the court for a reduction to \$25 weekly and professes his willingness to pay off the arrears as rapidly as possible. Mantell is said to be under contract to Augustus Pito.

Augustin Daly, speaking apropos of his recent revival of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," is quoted as saying that he never lost a dollar on Shakespearean production or revival in his life. His experience with Shakespeare's plays extends over a period of nearly thirty years.

A California paper of recent date says: "Another dream dispelled, another idol shattered. The ballet girl is mortal. Augusta Solke, a once famous dancer who pirouetted in the original "Black Crook" company, died last week of old age."

IN MUSICAL CIRCLES.

Stainer's "Crucifixion" as given by the choir of St. John's (stone) church on the 28th ult., was the musical event of that week not only because of its intrinsic merit but also because of the names of our local voices who took part in the production. The array of talent was well known in the community, their individual work is known, and much would be expected from those voices when united in any work, as they might well be called eclectic. In this work of Stainer there is little work for the soprano who on this occasion was Mrs. Carter, the tenor and baritone having the responsibility of the solid work, as it were. Mr. A. H. Lindsay was the tenor and in a number of instances he was almost handicapped by his score. His voice in concert work is well known and within its legitimate compass, appreciated, because it is then rather musical. I do

not think that Oratorio music is or is likely to become his field, but I do think he often undertakes parts that he cannot sing. He always gives me an unpleasant impression in his endeavors to sing tones that are really outside his fair reach. The effect is in consequence unpleasant. His voice has much power too, but despite that fact it was inaudible during some of the crescendo passages, so much more powerful was the organ at these moments. The same observation can be made of Mr. Coster's solo work. There was a like competition between his voice and the organ in some of his solos.—This gentleman's voice is most musical, it is powerful, it is resonant also, but in the instances referred to there was no voice heard, and it was not a matter of much surprise after all when one considers the powers of the average organ. Mr. Coster's voice is admirably adapted for Oratorio, he interprets and articulates well and he seems to delight in this sort of work. The duet by this gentleman and Mr. Starr was splendidly given and in my judgment was the best of the evening's work. The choruses would have been benefited by more rehearsal. In this reference to the handicap to the singers by the loud organ, it must be borne in mind that I do not impute want of skillful playing by the organist. It is simply an instance of mistaken judgment that so frequently attends the work of those who have an instrumental speciality.

The Scotch concert at St. David's last Monday evening was an occasion of much pleasure to all who were fortunate enough to be present. The programme was carried out as advertised with the exception of Mr. Lindsay's number which was omitted for the substantial reason that he was not present. The vocal solo of Miss Watson, the piano solo of Miss Emma Godard and the violin solos of Miss Gibbs and Mr. Watson were perhaps the most noticeable pieces on the programme.

At the concert to be given under the management of Mr. Titus on the 18th inst. Mr. Johnston will sing some of his own compositions.

Tones and Undertones.

"Rob Roy" at the Castle Square theatre, Boston, has had a nightly patronage during its first week limited only by the capacity of the house. There are 2000 seats in this theatre and not only was every one of them taken but hundreds were compelled to stand throughout the evening.

Mascagni has written a new opera soon to be brought out at Milan. It is called "Silvano," has no chorus and only three characters. Signor de Lucia will sing the tenor part.

The twenty-first rehearsal and concert of the Boston Symphony orchestra was given in Music hall, Boston, yesterday afternoon, at 2.30, and this evening, April 6, at 8, with the following programme:

- Symphony No. 4
Serenade for Wind Instruments
Two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns.
Concerto for Piano and Violin, "Freischuetz"
Soloist, Miss Antonette Szumowska.

In the church presided over by the now conspicuous Dr. Parkhurst of New York, a Miss Lucille Jocelyn has just been appointed first soprano.

The Kneisel quartette of Boston intending visiting London this summer and giving concerts there.

Mrs. Richard Blackmore jr., well known in this city, is continually adding to her good reputation as a charming singer. She was the soloist of the evening on a recent occasion in Boston and her selection a waltz song "Invitation to the Dance," Weber, was pronounced "a delicious treat."

On the 12th inst., (Good Friday) evening in Music hall, Boston, will be given Bach's Passion Music, by the Handel and Hayden society of that city. This will be the fourth public appearance of their eightieth season. Mrs. Jennie Patrick Walker will be one of the soloists. The society on Easter Sunday evening will give the new oratorio "The Life of Man." Carl Zerrahn will be the director and B. J. Lang, the organist.

The various church choirs in this city are all now actively at work in preparing their Easter music.

The following is the list of Wagner operas with the cast of each given in Boston this week under the direction of Mr. Walter Damrosch.

Thursday evening, April 4, "Siegfried:"

Friday evening, April 5, "Die Gotterdammerung:"

Saturday afternoon, April 6, at 2, "Tannhauser:"

Saturday evening, April 6, "Die Meistersinger:"

Herr Alvary stated recently that he had sung "Tannhauser" ninety-five times, "Lohengrin" seventy-six, in "Meistersinger" sixty-three, "Tristan" thirty-two, in "Rheingold" twenty-nine, and in "Gotterdammerung" thirty-four times. He does not always sing in tune however.

German opera will be given in Boston next week also. There will be four performances as follows: Monday evening, April 8, "Siegfried;" Tuesday evening, April 9, "Tannhauser;" Wednesday matinee, April 10, "Tristan and Isolde;" Wednesday evening, April 10, "Die Meistersinger."

A MAGNIFICENT DISPLAY.

A Spring Millinery Opening at Which There Were Many Visitors

The millinery department in Manchester, Robertson and Allison's was thronged with visitors on Tuesday of this week on the occasion of their spring opening. The very disagreeable state of the weather on Wednesday however very materially lessened the attendance, but those who found it impossible to attend on the preceding day and who braved the elements on Wednesday were in no way disappointed. When a PROGRESS representative dropped into the establishment on one of the opening days everything was full of life and activity. In bright cheery contrast to the wet, gloomy streets was the scene presented within. The millinery department, work rooms, etc. were for the time being transformed into beautifully draped apartments, with silken portiers, mirrors artistically draped with delicate silks, and in fact everything that could possibly add to the attractiveness of the rooms.

Of course the principal feature was the display of millinery, which never fails to attract a majority of the female population of the city and to an observer it would seem that in Manchester especially, the present season surpasses any previous ones. The elegant imported goods were strongly in evidence and as usual attracted much attention, though to the PROGRESS representative way of thinking, or looking at the matter rather, the work done in the establishment is just as pretty and stylish and, another very important thing to be considered, very much cheaper. To buy an imported hat, when one can have the exact fac simile of the same hat made at home for less than half the price is a bit of extravagance that to many seems entirely without reason; but certain it is that the home work can hold its own with any that is brought from abroad.

Manchester, Robertson & Allison never offer their patrons anything in any line but the very best obtainable and their millinery display this year is quite up to their usual standard of good taste and general excellence. There is no gaudy display, though there as everywhere this spring some very startling effects are seen. An attendant informed the representative that clover bids fair to become a rival of the violet this season and looking at the perfectly natural, and delicate white clover this would scarcely be surprising. Extreme width in hats is one of the leading points in the seasons work, and several exceedingly graceful and pretty hats in this effect were shown; buckles are not quite so large as in past seasons and are almost superseded this year by jet ornaments which come in very fanciful designs. Notwithstanding the mixture of contrasting colors, which is a little startling at first the millinery of the present season is becoming to most tastes, and strange indeed is the taste of the person who cannot find something to suit them in Manchester's magnificent display.

A Swedish electrician and musician has succeeded, after many years' trying, in making a new and, it is reported, a most successful musical instrument, which is played with keys like a piano. It has a frame on which are hung a score of tuned bells, a series of steel bars struck by metallic hammers, a row of steel strings of proper tension, a xylophone, and a kind of bagpipe made of a bar of steel and an electric current. The music from the new instrument is said to be very pleasing.

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