

The Stage.

Wallack's Theatre—"The World."

In a season covering a period of several months, almost all of the principal metropolitan play-houses manage to record at least one grand success. Whether it be with opera, drama, comedy or burlesque, or a combination of all, a single triumph goes far to obliterate, from the mind of the public, a score of failures. Most of the city play-houses, patronized by the more intellectual class of theatre-goers, have been fortunate in securing this single triumph early in the season, but it was left for the management of this house to achieve honor with "The World," produced for the first time in this country on Friday evening last. Identified as this theatre is with comedy, one would naturally look here for the comedy success of the year, but Mr. Wallack has gone a little out of his line in presenting this new attraction, and in place of an amusing and laughable bit of comedy, his patrons are treated to a delightful, sensational and realistic drama in five acts and eight tableaux, which bids fair to hold the boards until the termination of the regular season. "The World," written by Paul Merritt, Henry Pettitt and Augustus Harris, was originally produced at Drury Lane Theatre, in London, in July last, ran over a hundred nights, was then withdrawn and revived several weeks ago. Its success here, as in London, was instantaneous, and was principally due to the beautiful scenery and perfect stage mechanism which characterized its production. The story hinges on the sacrifices of an elder brother of a noble house. *Sir Clement Huntingford*, bearing the blame of his younger brother's misdeeds, wanders to the diamond fields in South Africa. Twelve years after, while there, he learns of his father's death in England and returns to claim his title and estate. On the vessel in which he embarks is secreted an infernal machine placed there by a money-lending Jew who has largely insured a package of bogus diamonds. The ship is blown up and *Sir Clement*, in company with a sailor and a boy, is rescued by a passing vessel from a raft on which they have been floating for thirty-two days. Arriving in London, the heir makes known his intention of claiming his estate, when *Harry*, his brother, who has lived the life of a profligate, determines to kill him in his room at the hotel. Entering the room, *Harry* in the dark kills, as he supposes, his brother, with a blow from a slung-shot, but really murders a thief who has chloroformed *Sir Clement* in order to make away with a box of diamonds. *Sir Clement* is awakened from his stupor by the struggle, catches a glimpse of the murderer, and again becomes unconscious. Presenting himself to the attorney who has charge of the family affairs, he is proclaimed mad by his brother, whom he has recognized as the murderer, and upon proclaiming that he is *Sir Clement* and that *Harry* is the murderer, is confined in

the lunatic asylum. From this he escapes, and is spared the trouble of prosecuting his villainous brother, who falls down the elevator of the hotel. The rest of the villains are personally dealt with, and the usual happy finale is brought about. There are other parts in the piece that relate to the story, but the foregoing is the axle upon which "The World" revolves. As will be seen, the story is interesting and well constructed, and affords the scenic artists and stage carpenters unbounded scope for grand effects. That they make the most of their opportunities is not to be denied. No such scenery and stage mechanism has been seen at this house in a long time. The first scene at Cape Colony, where the heir is shipping for England, is a masterpiece of stage work. It is realistic, and the artist, Mr. J. Mazzanowich, deserved the calls that were made for him. The second tableau, which represents the blowing up of the vessel, is by far the best ship scene yet witnessed in this city, but the real stage triumph, to our mind, is the raft in the open sea with the survivors. This is an impressive and realistic scene, and like the ship scene, the work of Mr. J. Clare. The lunatic asylum recalls the stage contrivance used in the "Shaughran," but the elevator in the hotel scene in the last act is used with startling effect. Of the acting only praise can be uttered. From Mr. Tearle, who plays the injured brother, to William Elton, who impersonates the villainous Jew, the characters are artistically presented, and, altogether, the production of "The World" is the Wallack triumph of the season.

Abbey's Park Theatre.

The only stage favorite who, to our eye, never grows old is with us once again, and as charming as ever. Without a visit from Lotta the season would not be considered complete. As *Little Nell*, and the *Marchioness*, in John Brougham's capital play of that name, founded on Charles Dickens' masterwork, "The Old Curiosity Shop," the little lady began her engagement at this house on Monday evening. She is the same mischievous, jolly little elf who has fed the hearts of millions with wholesome mental food, and given joy to many a heart. Laughing, dancing and rippling over with fun, it matters not in what rôle she appears she is ever the same favorite. Her winsome ways commend her to our hearty applause, and is not with a critical pen we write of Lotta. The public would not stand any critical analysis of her acting, and we are positive the acting could not. But Lotta does everything in her own cheerful way, and her jollity is as contagious as her tears. Her audience always laughs when she laughs, and cries when she cries, and she sends them home with the conviction that she is just the purest, gayest and happiest little mortal alive. As *Little Nell* she touches the hearts of the audience with her realistic rendering of the touching kindness to her poor old grandfather, and as the *Marchioness* she is the very incarnation of fun. The company that supports her during this engagement is a much better one than she has had before, therefore a visit at this time is all the more delightful.

Nobody will regret that the present is the last week at the Fifth Avenue Theatre of "That Man from Cataraugus." That it has been the poorest attraction put forth this season at Mr. Haverly's favorite house is admitted on every side, and any other actor, excepting Mr. Owens, who has more money than horse sense, would have withdrawn it after it had been pronounced by both press and public as a most abortive attempt to resurrect a mass of rubbish buried more than thirty years ago. Mr. Owens, however, thinks to achieve success with it throughout the country on the strength of its three weeks' run at this New York house, and in advertising it will naturally take good care to expunge the honest criticisms that the first presentation of it provoked. Next week, when the Comley-Barton Company, in "Olivette," hold the boards, we shall expect to see the sunshine come back to the face of genial Dan Frohman.

HAVERLY'S FOURTEENTH STREET THEATRE.—The ten people who comprise the Jarrett and Rice Comedy Company, now playing at this house in their specialty, "Fun on the Bristol," are as merry a party as we have seen this season. While their specialty is of a character that will not admit of criticism, inasmuch as it is composed of the wildest absurdity, it affords every member of the company a fair field for a fine display of his or her peculiar talents. Music, dancing, comedy, burlesque, and everything from which fun can be obtained, comprises this mirth-provoking concoction, and, when rendered by such clever people as Mr. John F. Sheridan, Frank Tannehill, Jr., Mark Smith, Myron Calice, William Hughes, William Courtright, Richard Waldon, Miss Marion Fiske, Kate Castleton and Agnes Hallock, there is not a dull moment from the rise to the fall of the curtain. It will be continued until further notice.

"MY PARTNER," with Louis Aldrich, Frank Moradant, Chas. T. Parsloe and O. H. Barr in the principal characters, is the principal attraction at Niblo's Garden Theatre. The rest of the company is composed of some good material, and the fine play is presented in a manner that calls for much praise.

The Comley-Barton Company began a five nights' engagement at the Brooklyn Theatre on Tuesday evening, producing "Olivette." As the residents of that city had enjoyed a previous visit of the same clever people in that delightful opera, it was to be expected that the audiences would be large and fashionable. Miss Catherine Lewis and John Howson are the favorites of the company, but the smooth and pleasant rendition of the sparkling piece is due to the combined efforts of the artists.

"THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH," at the Madison Square Garden, will take its departure after the performance to-morrow evening, and the many who failed to visit it will then regret the opportunity lost. It is not often that such a monster circus is witnessed even in this city, but we are assured by Mr. Barnum himself that only just such a show will in the future be connected with his name. He has made arrangements with his present managers to continue the great circus until the year 1899, and in the event of his death before that time has instructed his heirs to carry out his wishes. However, as the veteran showman has returned from Florida looking hale and hearty, we shall expect him to live a good portion of that period.

OUR theatre goers will lose another fine spectacle with the close of the current week in the withdrawal of "Voyagers in Southern Seas," at Booth's Theatre. But the incoming attraction is one that will bring more gold to the manager's coffers, and afford the critics fresh opportunities to praise the art of Mlle. Bernhardt. On Monday evening that great actress will appear for the first time in this city in "La Princesse Georges," and during the week as *Camille*, *Hernani*, *Frou Frou* and *Adrienne*. As this is the final engagement (of two weeks) of Mlle. Bernhardt, previous to her return to Paris, the attendance at the performances will undoubtedly be very large.

HERRMANN, who is unquestionably one of the cleverest prestidigitateurs of the day, is this week performing his wonderful tricks at the Windsor Theatre on the Bowery. As there is no possibility of conveying to the reader an impression of his remarkable performances, through the medium of a notice, we would advise all those who admire adroit neatness in slight-of-hand and other tricks, arts and devices to see Herrmann.

DE BEAUPLAN'S French Opera Company, of which we have heard the best accounts, will commence at the Academy of Music, on Monday evening, the 25th inst., some really excellent singers, who, during their stay, will appear in "Les Huguenots," "The Jewess," "Faust," "Aida," "L'Africaine" and other operas.... Billee Taylor, at the Standard Theatre, has proved a veritable bonanza for the management. It is a bright, melodious opera, and Mr. Henderson deserves the great success for giving it such thorough treatment.... "Cinderella at School," at Daly's Theatre, will be further strengthened next week by the addition of Mr. Digby

Bell, who has recovered from his late accident. His presence will insure a further success for the delightful production.... "Won at Last," by the Steele Mackaye Company, will be presented at the Bijou Theatre on Monday evening next. The management has made preparations that will insure success.... There is no end of fun at the San Francisco Minstrels. "Billy the Tailor, or All I've Eat," is a burlesque as funny and as comical as the name implies.... Emmet will be succeeded at the Grand Opera-house next week by Joseph Murphy, in "Kerry Gow."

CHICAGO CORRESPONDENCE (April 10).—Evidently there is a strong desire for another "Pinafore!" the crowds that have and are still patronizing "Billee Taylor" testify to this; but, do you know, I meet people who have been there who say it is not the thing, and I have sat through the thing twice and can not see what merit there is in it; there is not a single idea in it, neither is there a song worth remembering in the whole mess of rubbish. I am constrained to say that "Billee Taylor" is one of the big frauds of the season; but they remain another week all the same, and will probably do as well as they have the last week, for the want is there. Charming "Olivette" leaves Hooley's after a huge two weeks' business, and is succeeded by Robson and Crane in their last new conceit, "A. D. 1900." Gus Williams has had the poorest audiences of the season at McVicker's with his "German Senator." How any sane man can sit through such rot is a wonder. The "Legion of Honor" is the bill this week, the second engagement this season. Genevieve Ward in "Forget-Me-Not" at Haverly's has given us something quite artistic in the way of acting, but her company is only passable. There is something quite as good as "Diplomacy" in this play, "Forget-Me-Not." I should think Wallack's company could bring it out finely, but this company utterly fails to do so. Miss Ward will remain another week. We have the Ideal Opera of Boston underlined for an engagement here in "Olivette," at the Opera-house.

I am sorry to learn that the Beauplan French Opera goes to the Academy of Music in your city—and I fear they will not do well there. The pride and pimple class will not understand that superb orchestra. I hoped that Beauplan would have secured Booth's or the Grand Opera-house; then they would have gotten a large patronage, as they deserve; but if your readers care to hear good music they should not miss this chance by any means. There was some talk in the daily papers here regarding Haverly buying McVicker out, but the idea was one of that great bill writer, Fitzsimmons, who suggested it to Jack, who laughed it down. McVicker wanted \$150,000 for his shop. I am afraid Haverly will not get a place here unless the bank people allow him to retain the present house at a fair rental, which is more than probable. Haverly has, however, only filled dates here up to May 1, and everything is ready to close at once, but he will be here this week, and oh! the chin music that will follow. I'll be there, too. Hooley's Comedy Company is slowly forming; Jacques Kruger is the bright comedian, and several other people have been secured already. Maud Granger, who was married here only a few months ago, is playing in a low shop in Denver; how can her husband allow his new wife to play in such a dive?

Yours inquisitively,

HARRY B. FREE.

STAGE SPLINTERS.

GEO. PECK is not far from right when he says that burlesque opera is about played out. The company that visited Milwaukee recently wondered why their performances were so slimly attended. The troupe was large, numbering fifty performers, and the show was advertised liberally, but the houses were small, and the people went home with sour stomachs.

The trouble is that people have got sick of stale puns and whole legs. In the first place, there never was any humor in these puns or plays upon words that are used in burlesque operas, though fifteen years ago, when Lydia Thompson first imported human fresh meat, there were feeble minded people who ogled the long stockings and laughed at the puns. But late years when a pun is got off in a theatre there is no applause, except by some clacquer on the back seat, and the audience always looks at him as though he was a lunatic. People sit and listen to the puns and look ashamed of the fools who perpetrate them on the stage, night after night. When a pun is new it is bad enough, but when it has seen age, and has got gray, and become unable to stand alone, a sensitive person will have pity for it. So, when a pun is fired off and the person who fires it looks mad because no one applauds, some person in the parquette says "Oh! Oh!" and the audience laughs at that. Managers should learn that something new is wanted by the people. Why, during the past year a troupe has played through the West the old burlesque of "Ixion," which contained old gags and puns on events that were fresh in the minds of New Yorkers fifteen years ago, local gags on Tweed and Oakley Hall and Dick Connolly, people that are dead and forgotten, and the idiots on the stage actually looked astonished and whispered among themselves about the dullness of the audience, because it looked sick and did not applaud the pre-Adamite puns. Another thing, the leg business is carried a little too far nowadays. There is no audience but will be interested in a party of beautiful young women with short dresses on, say dresses that come below the knee. Such a drama retains its interest, from the fact that all are looking for an accident, by which perhaps a glimpse may be obtained—that is, that they may see more of the dramatic ability that they believe to be in the immediate vicinity. Then, to be interesting, the wearers of the aforesaid short dresses must seem to be modest. But when you put on the stage a lot of females whose faces resemble a masquerade ball, with legs of massive and beefy proportions, whose architectural faults may be classed as Corinthian, Ionic, octagon and renaissance, and with tights that reach from the floor to the small of the back, it is too much of a good thing, and audiences lose their appetite for such long-stocking opera, especially when there is no singing connected with it that would cause remark at a country singing school. The people who attend places of amusement are getting so they are the ones to say whether they shall go or not. The time has been when people would fill a house anyway, and ask no questions, but, nowadays a performance has got to be pretty good, with lots of fun in it, and the fact has got to be very thoroughly known before houses swell out with crowds. But the days of the punster shows and comic opera, whose comicality consists of nakedness entirely, are numbered, and next year we expect to see managers make affidavits beforehand that no wretched puns will be tolerated.

JOHN T. RAYMOND's mother-in-law, Rose Eyttinge, is but six months older than he is—too young to quarrel with, yet not quite young enough for a rival.

It was not the Currie who killed Porter the actor who was shot at Las Vegas, as reported last week, but another Currie, and the villain still lives. Currie should be induced to come to New York and take a position as dramatic critic on some paper. He could then abuse some actor or actress and it would be easy to kill him.

SOME of the members of the opera companies singing in harmony during their travels this season: Byron and Chaterton of the Strakosch and Hess troupe, had a fight on the stage of the Toronto theatre, the trouble being about a woman. Laurent and Greensfelder, of an "Olivette" company, had an altercation behind the curtain at Providence, the cause being similar. The prima donna of the Peerless opera company whipped the tenor at Columbus, Ga., because he hissed her in too realistic a fashion.

MADAME MALINGER, the great Wagnerian prima donna, has found a strange and original comfort for failure, which her master and patron would never have imagined. She carefully preserves the adverse criticisms inserted in the journals and, together with the praises expressed by indulgent connoisseurs, reads them aloud to her little dog "Tosto," who, apparently taking the cue from his mistress's voice, barks joyfully at the good words, and snarls most ferociously at the bad. It is, after all, only a duet.

At the opera the other night the audience was electrified for the moment by the appearance of a well-known leader of fashion in her box, apparently robed in her nightgown. It was soon discovered, however, that, following the popular desire to be considered *outré*, the lady had enveloped herself in a white satin ulster with cuffs and collar of white velvet. Doubtless white satin ulsters will now be quite the rage at our theatres.

OUR poet-lar is all unstrung by being on a bender, therefore our readers are deprived of the enjoyment which Spring poetry affords.

ANNIE LOUISE CARY refused to sing for the benefit of a cremation society in Pittsburgh, Pa., although offered the services of the furnace free whenever she should need it. Feeling insulted, she showed by her actions that she could fire up without the aid of a furnace.

"GREAT SINGERS," first and second series of Appleton's new Handy Volume Series, has just been issued. The work is edited by Mr. George T. Ferris, author of "The Great German Composers." It is unpretentious in style, the author's aim being to present in concise form a biography of the professional career of certain women who have figured upon the lyric stage as prima donnas. The style is pleasing and the descriptive matter highly entertaining.

AFTER all that has been said and expected Miss Anna Dickinson refuses to play male parts. Although she herself proposed the idea, and signed a contract with Manager John Stetson to play on the off Salvini nights in Philadelphia, she failed to make her appearance, and the citizens of that virtuous city were consequently much put out about it. After having gone to the expense of purchasing front seats, and having double powerful glasses placed in their opera-glasses, it was, to say the least, mean of the fair Anna to give the pious critics a stand off. Her refusal to appear, however, is attributed to the fact that she had recently seen Fanny

Davenport play *Rosalind*, and the great difference in the formation of their limbs so maddened the envious Anna that she determined not to give the "boys" a chance to make comparisons.

THERE is a new Mrs. "Fresh," but the lady was not found in the barem of a Turk, as is the one sought for by "Fresh the American," in the play of that name. Mr. John T. Raymond was married on Monday at Philadelphia to Miss Rose Courtney Barnes, the daughter of Rose Eyttinge and David Barnes, her first husband.