

AMUSEMENTS.

Cool weather, the return of many theatergoers from summer vacations and a general weakening of local theatricals generally combined to greatly increase the size of the audiences at the theaters last week. All this, in the face of the fact that there was little or practically nothing out of the ordinary presented at any of the playhouses, seems to be a pretty good indication of the fact that the exhibition closes and some of the big productions of new plays come along there will not be room enough in the theaters to accommodate the people anxious to attend. The Boyd did not enjoy quite the prosperity that the Trocadero and the Orpheum did. Since the opening of the season its management has presented nothing but farce comedy, and as theatergoers are not partial to farce comedy unless it is backed by a particularly strong company, produced by a strong manager, it is not surprising that the Boyd's success has been only a temporary one.

The Orpheum presented a vaudeville bill which included two particularly good numbers, Miss Helen Cotton's impersonation of one of Mrs. Leslie Carter's strongest scenes in "Zaza" and Henry Lee's character impersonations. Miss Cotton is certainly a clever actress and the scene she gave from Mr. Bellasco's popular play certainly whetted the appetites of all who witnessed it for the production which is to be presented in Omaha later in the season. Mr. Lee's impersonations were, in several ways, different from any of this kind ever seen here, and were decidedly praiseworthy.

The Trocadero theater enjoyed better patronage than has been accorded its stock opera company during any week since its opening, and that there is room in this city for a theater presenting this form of amusement there can now be no doubt.

For the week opening today there are some good things promised. Hoyt's "A Milk White Flag," which, while not new, is always interesting, comes to Boyd's this afternoon and evening. Boyd's big production of Bronson Howard's "Shenandoah," which was so popular a few years ago, is another old one that comes the first half of the week. For the last half of the week "A Romance of Coon Hollow" will be given. This is not a new play, having been seen here last fall.

The Trocadero Opera company will this week sing Planquette's opera comique, "The Chimes of Normandy." The Orpheum promises a meritorious vaudeville bill, headed by the Florenz troupe of acrobats.

The friends of Carl Ekstrom in this city will doubtless be pleased to learn that he has secured an engagement with one of Charles Frohman's companies, playing Chamarrat, a small part in "The Girl from Maxim's," which had its first production in New York recently, and is now running at the Criterion theater in New York. Mr. Ekstrom, who has lived in Omaha nearly all his life, left this city about a year ago to attend the Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York, from which he graduated recently. Mr. Frohman saw in his work promise of greatness and engaged him immediately upon his graduation. Mr. Ekstrom was quite popular in Omaha amateur dramatic circles.

Through the generosity of the different theatrical managers the Thurston Rifles (Company L of the First Nebraska volunteers) are enjoying the hospitality of the different playhouses. Last week they were the guests on Tuesday evening of the Trocadero management, and are to attend the performance at the Creighton-Orpheum in a body on the coming Tuesday night. The invitations include their ladies, and the boys have been so long absent from any place where good theatrical amusement was to be had they are taking advantage of the opportunities almost to a man.

Miss Nellie Paris, who recently announced her intention of going upon the stage, is to make her debut at the Creighton-Orpheum on Wednesday night, and will offer a singing specialty. Miss Paris has been a resident of Omaha nearly her whole life, and her many friends are anxious to see her succeed in her new venture.

New York theatergoers enjoyed quite a feast of new plays recently, there being at least a half-dozen offered, among the most important of which was "The Tyranny of Tears," with John Drew and Isabel Irving as the bright particular stars. "The Tyranny of Tears" is a new play, which was produced in London a year ago. It is a comedy from the pen of Haddon Chambers, one of England's leading dramatists. In their criticisms of the play and its interpreters the New York papers, with the exception of the "World," were very profuse in their praise of both. The "World" says: "It is a true comedy in the highest sense of the word. It is full of observation and gentle philosophy; its characters and situations are for the most part of a high order, and they are skillfully presented while the dialogue is naturally and spontaneously clever. That the career of the play, however, will have the full measure of prosperity it deserves is not so sure."

"The principal danger to us is that the average theatergoer will not find in it sufficient dramatic interest to hold his attention. The little scenes of everyday humdrum existence with which it deals do not lay hold of the heartstrings or excite the nerves. They simply present a moderately interesting people in a moderately interesting situation, with an under-current of instructive truth thrown in for those who care to think about it."

"There are also one or two details of interpretation that may exert an unfavorable influence on the success of the comedy. Reference to them, however, will be better understood after a brief outline of the plot has been given."

"A young literary man, Parbury, has been married for five years to a charming little wife whom he loves dearly and who returns his affection to the full. The only blot on his happiness is the over-sensitiveness of his wife. She wants to be by his side always, and breaks into tears whenever he gives her the slightest pretext for imagining that her love is not everything to him."

"Parbury has a stenographer, or secretary, a reserved young woman of attractive appearance. Miss Woodward. Mrs. Parbury enters the study one evening and finds this Miss Woodward alone gazing rapturously at the photograph of Parbury, which she suddenly raises to her lips and kisses. Mrs. Parbury orders her to go, but she stays at once, and Miss Woodward refuses to leave unless she is told to do so by her employer. Parbury's wife appeals to him and asks him to discharge the secretary, taking care, however, to conceal the reason for the step from a natural sentiment of delicacy and prudence. Parbury, thinking his wife is simply obeying one of her unreasonable impulses, refuses to discharge his secretary, whereupon Mrs. Parbury, after fair warnings, leaves him and goes off with her father."

"Parbury is miserable without her. She is miserable without him. Parbury learns the cause of the trouble, and Mrs. Parbury learns that Miss Woodward was not in love with her husband, and that he had no senti-

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FLORENZ TROUPE  
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Frank Kent  
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Miss French  
America's Favorite  
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Gardner and Hunt  
The acme of kid glove musical artists.

Bert C. Gagnon and  
Edith Pollock  
Descriptive Songs—Stereopticon Views.

Next in line of importance was Minnie Madden Flak's appearance in Langdon Mitchell's dramatization of Thackeray's "Vanity Fair," as Becky Sharp. It was hardly received with the same spirit by the critics as was "The Tyranny of Tears." Just the reverse, with one exception the New York papers were rather harsh in their criticisms. The "Journal" said it "will not have dramatic value, that Mrs. Flak's portrayal of the familiar character of Becky was bad and any number of other harsh things. The Tribune was not quite so harsh, but thought that Mrs. Flak did not quite portray Thackeray's Becky as he meant her to be. The Herald criticizes the play harshly, but of Mrs. Flak's work speaks as follows: "Mrs. Flak's Becky Sharp is clever and consistent in her conduct, and is well acted and carefully wrought out. It does not seem quite Thackeray's Becky, because it does not quite answer to the Becky Sharp that Thackeray has conjured up in the individual mind. Perhaps no individual has quite the same idea. Here, therefore, we invariably have to content ourselves with Mr. Mitchell's idea as wrought out by Mrs. Flak. Something of our own fixed notions must be sacrificed in the transmission from mind to mind. What the novelist left to inference must be explained bluntly and frankly by dramatist and actor. It is explained intelligently and coherently, but, after all, it is the explanation of an explanation. It still needs the filip of memory to reawaken the old illusion."

Mrs. Flak's supporting company includes Maurice Barrymore, Charles Plunkett, Arthur Mattland and others not so well known to Omaha theatergoers.

Of the other new plays produced the "World" says: "The other theatrical offerings of the week comprised three farces, 'Mr. Smooth,' at the Manhattan, 'In Paradise,' at the Bijou, and 'The Hobbs' at the Lyceum. All three may be described as 'relative successes.' None of them rises above the ordinary in a single particular and each is composed chiefly of well-worn theatrical expedients and situations. Introduced with more or less spontaneity for the sole purpose of provoking mirth. This is well enough in its way and it is the usual process in the making of farces. The fact that a situation has been used before is of small consequence to the playgoer. The only trouble is that when a playwright consciously borrows other people's materials and combs effects usually do not seem to flow out naturally from characters and story and there is an apparent lack of spontaneity in all that occurs. Even the most unsophisticated spectator cannot help feeling that something is hollow and forced about it and he does not laugh as heartily as the really comic situation would seem to warrant. All three of the new farces have this defect to a considerable extent."

"In Paradise" was written by three Frenchmen, "Miss Hobbs" by an Englishman, and "Mr. Smooth" by an American. The difference in the subjects and sentiments dealt with and the manner of treatment correspond very closely to the difference in nationality."

Willie Collier was the star in "Mr. Smooth." Richard Golden in "In Paradise" and Annie Russell in "Miss Hobbs."

Stuart Robson is confronted with the grave danger of having his expensive New York production of "The Gadfly," the dramatized version of Mrs. E. Lynn's novel, enjoyed by the author on the opening night. Arrangements have been made to present the play in New York tomorrow evening. Differences between Mr. Robson and Mrs. Lynn have culminated in an intention on the part of the author to prevent Mr. Robson from acting the play, on the ground that it is not an artistic and faithful reproduction of her book.

The original dramatization of "The Gadfly" was made by Mrs. Lynn and she came to New York to be present at the rehearsals. It was soon discovered that she lacked knowledge of stage technique and Mr. Robson undertook to rewrite the play according to his own ideas. Mrs. Lynn's "The Gadfly" was a masterpiece of dramatic art and the rehearsals became stormy affairs. The play was tried in Providence, R. I., Monday night last. Mrs. Lynn was present at the performance and attributed the lack of success to the liberties taken with her version. Mrs. Lynn has decided, it is said, to prevent its performance before a metropolitan audience, on the ground that it was a reflection on her literary abilities and that her contract called for an exact reproduction of her work. The production he said to have cost Mr. Robson nearly \$25,000. It has been staged lavishly with a cast of twenty persons, including Marie Burroughs.

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For the Week Beginning Sunday, September 17  
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Beginning at 4 p. m. Monday, Prof. Alfreno,  
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Steamer Jacob Richtman  
Leaves Douglas Street at 2 and 8 p. m., returning at 5 and 11 p. m. Music and dancing.  
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Will Lay Cinder Sidewalks.  
The board of public works Friday has adopted specifications for cinder sidewalks, to be laid in the outlying districts, where it is impracticable to lay any other kind of permanent walk. The specifications will have to go to the council and mayor for approval. The contract for the construction of a sewer on Thirty-fourth street, from Leavenworth to Mason streets, was awarded to J. P. Conolly.  
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TWO PERFORMANCES DAILY, Rain or Shine. Every afternoon at 2 o'clock and every evening at 8 o'clock. Doors open one hour earlier.  
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