



## AMUSEMENTS

Friday evening of last week theatre goers had to choose between Marie Jansen in "Delmonicos at 6" at the Lansing and Hoyts' "A Temperance Town" at the Funke. Both houses were well filled. If Miss Jansen has a predilection for comedy, as reported, she would do well to exchange it for something more in her line. She might, for instance, return to comic opera where she had some success. "Delmonico's at 6" is a very faulty play. In fact it is one big fault. Miss Jansen did the proper thing when she shelved it in the east, and it was a mistake when she took it down again for use on her western tour. There are people in her company capable of better things. They overact the play—the manuscript makes them do it. "A Temperance Town" had been seen here before. It partakes more largely of dramatic form than Mr. Hoyt's previous efforts, and one is forced to believe that the man who gave us "A Brass Monkey" and jangled "A Bunch of Keys" regarded himself seriously when engaged in the building of "A Temperance Town." His intention was to write a play with a purpose. He did, however, put a quantity of the old time Hoyt fun into it, and the play has been successful. It was ably acted.

Damning souls, one would think, is quite as serious an occupation as saving souls. Mr. Morrison and Mr. Griffith and most of the actors who have lately essayed the Mephistophelian role appear to think it necessary to indulge in unseemly levity. Very few of us think of the devil as a clown—and this is what these actors make of the prince of darkness and protagonist of evil. The pursuit of the souls of *Faust* and *Marguerite* is quite enough to occupy the attention of *Mephisto*, and most of the smirking and buffoonery that modern *Mephistos* exhibit are entirely foreign to the part. Mr. Griffith, since his last appearance here, has greatly improved his interpretation. Study of *Faust* has wrought in him a nearer approach to the Mephistophelian ideal, and while his *Mephisto* is still designed to appeal to what is called the "popular" taste, there are fewer concessions to the gallery. This actor has an intelligent appreciation of the sinister cunning and malevolence associated with the character of the son of chaos, and he is showing increasing ability in his portrayal of a most difficult role. The performance as seen at the Lansing theatre Monday night is a triumph for an actor as young as Mr. Griffith. Good devils are rare. The Keene school, in which noise is the principal desideratum, has had its influence on Mr. Griffith. But he has in one season overcome, to a very considerable extent, the disposition to indulge in the "Horatio at the Bridge" style of oratory; he can with artistic, if not financial profit, still further restrain himself. But those who are inclined to criticize current renditions of "Faust" can with propriety place some of the blame on the so-called Henry Irving version of Goethe's great work, which is the basis of most of the representations, we see now-a-days. Mr. Irving's version might well be revised. We do not know that lavish electrical effects and gorgeous scenery are necessary in a production of "Faust", but Mr. Church has followed Morrison and provided settings and scenic paraphernalia with a lavish hand—he has even gone so far as to furnish sky that changes its color every fifteen seconds. The company is substantially the same as when Mr. Griffith left Lincoln. It gives him fairly adequate support, and its various members, like the principal, show improvement. The production undoubtedly, rank with the best productions of "Faust" in popular dramatic form lately seen in this country, and it deserves the success it is apparently receiving.

Annie May Abbott, "the electrical wonder" who gave exhibitions at the Funke opera house Wednesday and Thursday, is a later Lulu Hearst. Her feats were performed with the assistance of reputable citizens, and the audience was convinced on both occasions that there was no chicanery. She was more than a match Wednesday evening for the combined efforts of Lieutenant Governor Moore, W.

C. Mills, H. E. Mitchell, Auditor Moore, and others, lifting prodigious weights, etc. The exhibitions were highly entertaining.

The first production of "The Wandering Jew" by George Backus and Nelson Wheatcroft occurred Monday evening in Kansas City. The play was produced by the same company that presented "The Lost Paradise" in this city. Gustave Frohman was present at the first performance.

## BEING CHEERFUL.

[Written for THE COURIER.]

It is a well known fact, as the university students say in debate, when they make an unusually audacious statement, it is a well-known fact that cheerfulness is a matter of temperament, not of circumstances or environment. There is no credit in being jolly with the world at your feet, but a kingdom waits for him who smiles when the world snarls at him. The young poet's muscles are still under his control. He can make of himself what he will. With a predisposition to melancholy, nursing has increased it, and it grows by what it feeds on. He has boldly met, and partly overcome, adverse circumstances. The worst is over. The world waits to welcome him. At every corner he makes or meets a friend who is glad to help and be helped by him.

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Bryant wrote tomb-poetry because he got started that way. He came of a long line of Puritan ancestors, self-repressed, stoical, grave. To him alone was given the gift of tongues and he uttered the thoughts of four generations that had been tutored by a cruel dogma, and by the rock-bound hills of New England. He was not sick nor lonesome, nor poor. On the contrary, an athlete, he was the apex of the literary group in New York city, and very rich. The last years of his life he was the first citizen of the United States. If Shakespere had visited this country, Wm. Cullen Bryant would have been selected to go up the gang-plank and welcome him, at the same time letting him know his place. Mr. Bryant had done it with the hoary gravity of a great man in his great act. Caesar's dust had blown into their eyes and a million spectres had walked with them, but Shakespere would have been cheerful. He had Abraham Lincoln's faculty of appearing frivolous on momentous occasions—a faculty rare and grateful. It relieves the tension of formal occasions and just as much is accomplished when concentration is worth while. As I was saying, Mr. Bryant had everything to make him happy except happiness. He may have had that, too, though by his poetry he seemed not to be. Very likely he took a satisfaction in his portentous solemnity. It was such an unbroken consistent gloom. The contemplation of any perfect thing is always an exquisite pleasure to its creator.

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Hood lay in his bed dying, poor; racked with pain, still making jokes and laughing at them. Misfortune accompanied Shelley and Keats through life. But their element is the Emyrean. They have wings, wings; we can only flop when we follow after; but the effort lifts our minds if not our bodies.

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There is not a morbid line in the Great Poet's plays. Gossip of his griefs has reached us only from the outside.

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"Be jolly, and if you can't be jolly, be as jolly as you can."

SARAH B. HARRIS.

## MY NOSEGAY.

There are roses in my lady's cheeks  
And purple pansies in her eyes,  
Her hair is made of butter cups  
And at her throat the lily lies.

—WILLIAM REED DUNROY.

"Beauty" may be "only skin deep;" but the secret of a beautiful skin is pure blood. Those coarse, rough, pimply complexions may, in most cases, be rendered soft, smooth, and fair by the persevering and systematic use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla.