

## THEATRICAL NOTES

Rosabel Morrison in the drama of *Carmen*, played at the Funke on Monday night to only moderate business.

The drama of *Carmen* differs from the opera as prose from poetry.

Without song and music *Carmen* is a coarse, mercenary minx who distributes her favors to the highest bidder. In the opera *Carmen* is still a devil, but a beautiful, capricious, fascinating gypsy too.

*Carmen* in the opera is femininity, perverse, wicked, even devilish, but charming still. In the drama she is a coarse female whom the audience rejoices to have stabbed in its presence. The lilt of the *Carmen* music obscures the character of *Carmen*, makes it less repulsive. Isabel Morrison plays it as it is written, and although from beginning to end the interest is well sustained, and even at times becomes suspense, *Carmen* has the fatal defect of fickleness. A lack of constancy in the heroine dissipates the interest the audience should feel in her. And in this case there is no one to transfer the interest to; Don Jose is tiresome. He is full of reproaches, deserted poses and appeals which make him about as interesting as a month of Sundays. Martyrs make racy reading, but it is a terrible bore to live with them.

Rosabel Morrison is spirited. She conveys her conception of the character with clearness.

Edward Elsner is graceful and plays his ungrateful part sympathetically. The scenery was rich in color and Spanish in effect, which is more than can be said of the operas which have presented *Carmen* in days gone by.

The Lincoln Light Infantry played to very good business at the Lansing on Monday night. The dotting audience received the local hits and the sportive gambols of their brothers, beaux and acquaintances with delight that was not unmerited. It was the best annual performance the infantry has yet given, which is saying much.

Bancroft, the prestidigitateur, played to a much smaller house than he deserved at the Lansing on Tuesday evening. Mr. Bancroft is that anomaly, a young wizard. Graceful, svelte, suave, clad in black small clothes, the curtain rises, disclosing a noble marble staircase, inlaid floors and flower-enwreathed pillars. At whose base stand two lackeys as motionless as the marble. The hall furniture is ivory; tables with elephant's tusks, other tables and stands with the carved heads of jungle beasts projecting. The effect is charming and in a moment when a young man, the heir to all this beauty, clad in black with a wizard's cloak fluttering about him descends the staircase from what were once flies, the effect is dramatic. It is not for the unprofessional to say that Bancroft's tricks and passes are as clever as Hermann's, but I can see no difference. Although the basis of his tricks is old: firing handkerchiefs, oranges and pigeons into Boomsby, Bancroft has introduced a few flourishing details which are new. The last years of his life Hermann appeared to do most of his tricks with elaborate machinery, which lessened the mystery. This young man appears not to have much machinery.

The original and only Satsuma, whom the playbill says is the leading exponent of his art, and royal juggler by appointment to his Imperial majesty, the Mikado of Japan, is a wonder, and the mikado is generous to let him travel in

America. His feet are like four hands and his hands are inspired. With the solemnity and ease of his race he balances and catches balls and sticks or kicks boxes and Japanned cots into the air as another man kicks a football. I only envy the mikado—his juggler. If I were it, this little yellow mummy in the gold flower garden dress should toss balls for me every afternoon.

The Lansing was full on Wednesday night to hear "A Black Sheep."

This farce is like "A Texas Steer," only better. "Hot Stuff," the happy penniless champion of "Under Dog" in Tombstone, Arizona, laughs, drinks and fights with the abandon of the prodigal son. When the New York lawyer discovers in him the heir to two millions,



THOMAS W. KEENE.

Hot Stuff invites all the crowd to drink. The basis of enjoyment in Arizona—that is, storybook and dramatic Arizona,—is not money, except that it takes money to get liquor. A man with leather breeches, a red shirt, strength and bravery is a king in Tombstone. And "Hot Stuff" knows it. New York, Europe and an heiress are nothing to him if he must lose Tombstone's unconventionality and the adoration of a mining camp to obtain them. Whatever there is of fascination in the hero of "She Stoops to Conquer," "The Three Guardsmen," or Shakespeare's Prince Hal before he is crowned—"Hot Stuff" has. The description of such heroes has no particular charm. To drink, to swear, to make love, to fight, all at the drop of the hat, is not admirable in itself. Yet these four characters are most beloved of men and women. Who can ever forget the younger Salvini, in "The Three Guardsmen,"? A game cock, out crowing and out-fighting everything in sight. Gallant, thinking of nothing, but doing all the time. Hamlet is morbid and tiresome in comparison. I think these

heroes conquer by their manishness. It is the eternal masculine that slays its tens of thousands while better, more constant, aspiring souls sit in their study and write down lofty thoughts together with their opinion of girls who adore swashbuckling squires, sailors and soldiers better than men of thought and high emprise, who write sweet things but whose action is meditation.

Otis Harlan, "Hot Stuff," enjoys his work and the friends he makes by it. Life to him is not "one grand sweet song," but "one grand long racket." He learns his humour on the audience as May Irwin does, or as the sun shines. He has temperament in large quantities. Its lucky he is an actor with all that temperament; he would bust if he had not the opportunity for expression.

Wm. De Vere, Goodfellow Gunning, the Arizona editor who went for subscriptions with a gun and got 'em, is of the same type with the addition of the shrewdness that his calling develops. Mr. De Vere is a very good actor, and his laughing song is famous. He could, if he would, play "Pudd'n Head Wilson" as well as the great original.

The company was very good in chorus and in acting. Young Mr. Luckstone's

Lansing Monday evening. This is a dramatization of Sir Walter Scott's novel,—"Quentin Durward," with new scenes and situations written expressly for Mr. Keene, and found in no other acting version.

The story of Louis XI is the history of France of the early part of the fifteenth century, touching upon the incidents marking the closing days of one of the most remarkable men that ever disgraced a throne. Louis' rule was a continuous fight against the feudal power of the nobles of France. It was also a struggle for supremacy between the Orleanists, represented by Louis, and the Burgundians under Charles the Bold. Louis, like Richard III of England, was no timid ruler. In natures alike they defended their crowns with all the red-hand power of their medieval training. Crafty, cruel, treacherous, loving no one, not even the Dauphin, Louis' life was a struggle against cringing superstition and an abject fear of death. Prisons swarmed with the victims of his hatred and his policy; the ax of the headsman was ever busy; he trusted none, for none trusted him; the meanest tools of his will chosen from the dregs of life were the trusted officers of his council; he was a slave to his physician to whom he ascribed the powers of life and death; he was a constant prey to dread of assassination; and the one spark of affection flashing at times for his son only, was always marred by a distrust that the son might conspire to remove him from the throne, as he himself had been more than suspected of acting towards his own father.

The plot of the play is unique and intensely dramatic. The young Duke de Nemours, whose father had been beheaded by Louis, arrives at the French court held for the time in the castle of Plessis les Tours. He comes as envoy from Burgundy, his identity as Nemours being alone known to Cortier, De Comyns and his daughter Marie. There is an old love between Nemours and Marie, and from the confiding girl, Louis elicits the fact of the presence of his determined enemy. As envoy Nemours' person is supposed to be sacred, but Louis who was never known to regard an obligation, plans with one of his minions to assassinate him. Circumstances connected with the envoy, however, release Louis from all further hypocrisy of purpose, and Nemours is arrested and doomed to death.

Prices, \$1.00, 75, 50 and 25c. Sea's now on sale at theatre box office.

C. B. Jefferson, Klaw & Erlanger's gorgeous spectacular production of "Palmer Cox's Brownies," which has had long and successful seasons in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago, will be the notable attraction at the Lansing theatre on Wednesday and Thursday nights of the coming week, with a special Thursday matinee. Seats for the great attraction go on sale Monday morning at 10 o'clock. In scenery, costumes, properties, mechanical and electrical effects "The Brownies" is the most successful spectacle now before the public. The play opens with a prologue, in which Dragonfel, an evil enchanter, is pledged the assistance of Vulcan in his plan to frustrate the marriage of Prince Florimel, heir, by adoption, to the Brownie King, and Titania, Queen of the Fays. The next scene reveals the palace courtyard of Queen Titania, where the wedding is about to be celebrated in a shower of roses. Dragonfel succeeds in abducting the Queen and her ladies in waiting. The scene changes, showing a mountainous sea coast, where Dragonfel is seen bearing away the helpless Queen, with the Brownies in pursuit. The scene again shifts, disclosing the Brownies adrift on a raft in mid-ocean. A terrible storm overtakes them, and they are wrecked. The duke Brownie falls overboard in the excitement, and is picked up by a colossal sea-bird, while

"El Capitan" was the best thing, musically of the evening.

Mr. Hoyt himself has a prejudice against Lincoln because we don't like "A Contented Woman," and especially Caroline Miskel Hoyt. The latter is too beautiful to send so far west. I hear New York likes her, in which case Mr. Hoyt can forget Lincoln's poor taste.

The Eunice Goodrich company played to standing room only at the Funke last week, and the Holden Comedy company has played to large houses all the week.

It is a frequent cause of complaint that both theatres are not heated enough this winter. I really think it would pay to heat up the furnaces. Amusement seekers are frequently kept at home by the thoughts of a freezing auditorium.

Few plays of modern authorship are of stronger interest than "Louis XI," to be presented by Thomas W. Keene, Charles B. Hanford and company at the