LIFE AMONG THE LOWLY

Tales of How Bottom Dwellers Eke Out an Existence.

SAD CONDITION OF THE INHABITANTS

Pen Pictures of Some of the Houses and Residents Who Abound in the Squatter Town Districts to the South.

South of the Willow Springs distillery is another collection of shanties. The railroad track divides them into two parts—those along the river bank and those on the leased ground. The latter do not extend below the old Boyd packing house, but those along the river continue as far as Dorcas street. These people are not so affable as those higher up the river. Many of them are rather self-sufficient, and, as a rule, they have more work to do. The houses are of much better build and many have brick chimneys. An old rag picker occupies one of most peculiar construction. It is a two-story affair, with small, square windows. The weather boards are wide and the building is perfectly square. Other shanties stand off from it but a few feet and lovers could kiss from the windows of the different habitations in that cluster. On the river bank stands the absolutely burglarproof barn of this rag picker. It is a strangely home-made affair, covered with heavy sheet iron, and strongly barred and bolted.

But the dogs. Great big fellows with long pointed teeth that make the flesh quiver in their grasp. They spring out upon you from all corners and where you least expect them. Not one of them wears a tag. I saw a well built, mansard roof house and I entered the yard. After I rang the door bell and the dog had bitten me the master appeared. He wore the star of a sanitary policeman. He said he owned his house and grounds, and that the people who lived around there were the finest in the world, and that they worked hard and never touched a drop of liquor. He advised me to go the river, far down the river, to find people that could be talked about. He and his family, all people near him and about him were the cleanest, the purest, the most virtuous and the most industrious people on God's earth. The place was so healthful that, if the world but knew it, great sanitariums would be erected on the spot. This man had a very good house, two stories, with six rooms. The yard was clean and well kept. The man said "goodby," the dog tugged savagely at its chain and I passed from his gate.

I visited the homes of these good people. Many of them are comfortable, but the houses are small for large families. Most of their owners work in the smelter, the distillery or the packing houses. Some are ice men, a few work in the stone yards and the soap factory. There are others in wretched poverty. Most of these unfortunate are farther down and directly upon the river bank. There is plenty of drift wood, and all seem well provided with burning material. The devices for pulling the heavy logs upon shore are very ingenious. They are well versed in the laws of mechanics, especially the lever and screw.

A man and his wife were fishing; and, when they came ashore, they sat upon a log and talked. The woman was ladylike and gentle in her manner. She was attired in a faded calico gown and her sunbonnet was of the same material. She wore stockings, but no shoes. To the east and south the surroundings were beautiful—the cloud-screened sunlight fell upon the distant bluffs. The mingled tints of clay and leaves were seen on every side; and, far down the river, the wind blew the sand into a misty cloud. This wind came up brisk and strong from the southeast, and it sent the dark waves of the Missouri dashing and bursting upon its western bank. Large logs and boats were moored there, and they rose and fell with the river's agitation. Huge logs, rude huts and splashing waves seemed for a moment to make the fisherman's life a charmed existence. Every Bohemian instinct was awakened, but they soon vanished, for the wind grew stronger, the flying sand pelted harder and the rain began to fall in great, heavy drops.

The emotions were revelling in poetry when the fisherman's "cot" was entered, but the fisherman's "cot" was no poem. The ceilings did not rise six feet above the floor of broken boards. The walls were partly covered with soiled newspapers, and the beds had a look that made a creeping sensation come over you. Two bright and dirty faced little boys tried to "show off," and the mother struck at one playfully with her apron, stiff from wear. The little fellow got a broom, and, for a while "catch-as-catch-can" was witnessed on a small scale. This woman had that love for decoration found in every feminine heart. Framed photographs and chromos hung upon the walls, and colored advertising cards were arranged in studied designs. "When we wanted money," the wife did washing. She said the city physician had been kind to her, and always answered her calls upon him. Once last winter, some charitable people visited them and gave liberally of good advice. No, she would not admit her life was a happy one, nor that she was satisfied with it. But what she feared most was the coming winter's cold, and that must be dreadful, for every wind could come through the cracked boards of her shanty. She and her husband were Americans, and came from Indiana five years ago.

ALL ONE FAMILY.

I entered a small frame house. In its basement, without doors or windows, were the fowl and hogs. The people upstairs were taken by surprise at my entrance. They were eating. There were no dishes—raw soured cabbage, sausage and dark bread lay upon the table, and there seemed a goodly supply of beer. The occupants of this house, aside from the fowl and hogs, were one man and two women; all were barefooted. The man said he "plastered." I left them gladly.

Aside from the fishermen, at most of the shanties, I saw similar sights and heard similar stories, when I heard any at all. The fishermen and their wives are not so reticent, and they told of things quite freely.

The fishermen make very little. A week's work amounts to no more than $2. I saw two days' work, and an ill-looking job it was—a box of great, ugly muddy sturgeons, with large disgusting heads and long snaky tails. About one-half would be waste. The fishermen do not like their work, but they say they can get nothing else.

Sunday on the bottoms differs little from the other days. All the saloons were open—when the policeman was out of sight. Little children came empty-canned and were not sent away with a stone. I asked a little fellow what he was doing and he replied, "Rushing the growler." From speech and appearance I judged him an American. Being Sunday more men were around and the children were dressed cleaner. The men were all smoking.

From the hill there appear to be about 150 shanties. The region, with all its wretchedness and poverty, is not without beauty. The steep declines are covered with vines and bushes, and often a hut stands in a most picturesque place. So situated, even the torn garments upon the clothes line are viewed with an artist's eye. One hut stands alone upon a high clay bank over which the delicately leaved vines are creeping. An aged, drawing-book-like fence surrounds it, and the rough boards of the habitation seem especially designed for the sketcher's pencil. Of course, such a house must have an owner equal to it; but, no, it just held a man whose occupation was no more romantic than packing meat in a South Omaha factory. His wife and family looked like all other poorly dressed people. From the outside there is something striking about the houses along the river bank. To the southwest the hills are cut and they stand with sharp outlines. The trees which grow upon them are well leaved and stately.

I entered some shanties on the west side of the track, and most of them were rather clean. One man and his wife were very quick to talk and answer questions, but their visitor, a tall, red whiskered man, seemed of a different turn of mind. I jotted down a name, and he grew nervous and said repeatedly, "Sein ruhig! Sie schreibt 'a.'" A group of children had gathered about, and I then questioned them and the parents about church attendance and Sunday school. The suspicion died away, and every question was answered, for they thought I was a harmless missionary. From Walnut street to Cedar the land belongs to P. E. Iler, and the people are charged on an average $25 per year for one lot. Most of these habitations are plastered, and many of them are clean and orderly. The farther from the river and the higher up the better the shanties are. The workingman's home is always better than the fisherman's. Few of the former get steady work, at the most not more than three days in a week. There are many who have nothing to do and they manage to exist upon what they can raise and get from the river. Nearly all keep fowl and have gardens. The soil is very poor, but a few of the industrious ones get good loam by hauling it from the hills above them. On the river banks nothing of any value can be grown. Here can be found the homes of some milkmen, but to look into their habitations would not increase the appetite for the white beverage.

Many of the children work, and some of the families depend upon them for all their cash. Several little fellows work for news companies and receive $3 per week. It appears that much charity has been distributed in this region, and Dr. Duryea is the best known man in Omaha to these people. Many of them do not know him by name, but can describe him and give the location of his church. Two clergymen, a German Catholic and a German Lutheran, have done much for them, but they cannot give their names nor the location of their churches. There is no doubt, from the stories told, that many made a business of obtaining charity, and there were some who were too proud to apply, though they suffered from the cold and hunger. Cases are told of women borrowing their neighbors' children when applying for aid. In two cases this was found out by the authorities.

FOUND THE SINFUL SIREN.

A flaxen haired man and his wife pointed out the houses "where bad womens live and where the policemans often go and take them to yail." The home of one of these fallen creatures was no "guilded palace of sin." On the outside the rough boards were partly covered with tar paper, held with laths. From the windows no plaster could be seen, only wall paper put on the cracked boards. The occupants were a middle-aged woman and her daughter, a child not older than 15, but tightly corseted and developed far beyond her years. Their clothing was not clean. This woman's sister, of similar character, lives in a comfortable house, made conspicuous by its red paint.

Upon the sunken reservoir of the deserted gas plant a crowd of boys were seated. All of them were neatly dressed, and many of them came from the comfortable homes upon the hill. They beat the heavy sides of the empty tank, and it sounds like thunder, just as rumbling and just as deep echoed, along the river banks. They were a set of frolicsome fiends, and when I misjudged my footing and sank deep in the mud they cried and whistled and cheered and beat the sides of their mighty drum, until the air was hideous with their noise. Here and there little base ball nines were at work. There were many errors and the scores locked very long.

Shanty after shanty was visited, and the occupants were interviewed, but nothing new was seen, nor nothing new was heard. Some had work and some had not. The shanties that were not plastered were papered inside and out—on the outside with tar paper, on the inside with dailies. Many of the places were clean, but some were filthy. There were a few sickly flowers in cans, and dogs and cats and chickens in plenty.

After the old Boyd packing house is reached the shanties become thin and run in single file to Dorcas street. In one of these dwells the bride of a few days. In a tar-papered, daily lined shanty, she dwells with her sixth husband, a gentleman lately from the Lincoln penitentiary. This bride is neither young nor blushing; she is withered and faded and wrinkled, and her reputation is still something no woman should be proud of, and her breath bore the odor of whisky. The bride was attired in a calico gown of scarlet hue, and her hair had many a crimp and curl. She wore rings and ear-drops and a glorious hairpin. She did not say she was a bride; perhaps the sorrows of her life had destroyed her trusting nature and crushed out its romance. She only told of her many failures to get work and how hard she sought it. Her rooms showed some attempt at decoration, and, from all appearance, the nuptial festivities were not yet at an end. Suspicious looking bottles were in abundance and quite a company of gentlemen were seated in a room. The 21-year-old son of this bride has lately been a bridegroom; he led to the altar a stately dame of 60 years, for love can play strange pranks, even on the Omaha bottoms.

In the shanty at the end a man was found not often met with in this world. He was well educated, well versed on all topics and he took and read both Omaha dailies. He was a typical American in face, physique and voice. For nearly fifty years he claimed to have lived in this part of Nebraska, and he had served in the Indian wars, in the Second Nebraska under Ed Patrick. He would now be, had he so wished, "as rich as John A. Creighton:" This gave him no annoyance for he blamed no one but himself, and he was soon to join Coxey's army. This, he said, every man without work should do. He was perfectly content with his lot, but not with the affairs of the world. He joins the Industrials next week and he glories in his course. I asked him what he would do to enter this army and he said he would go to Des Moines and enter it as he would any other army. He claims no "tramps" are allowed in this band, and that they are cast out every day when discovered. The knowledge and intelligence of this man were astonishing and his conversation would bore no one. His partner is a gold pen maker, and has worked at that trade for years. As a pair, they are well met, and share each other's advanced views.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

Monday night, May 14, will crown Willard Spenser's pretty opera, "The Princess Bonnie," at the Chestnut Street theater, Philadelphia, with its fiftieth performance, and it will be celebrated as a gala event.

A choir of sixty-six trained vocalists from Stockholm, Sweden, will give concerts of Swedish music in London during June.

Meyer Lutz, the musical director of the Gaiety theater, London, composes anywhere and everywhere. In the streets, on tops of omnibuses and even in church.

Marcus Mayer will sail for Europe in June with the intention, it is said, of securing Mlle. Zelie de Lussan for a tour through the United States. Additional color is given to this statement by an announcement that Mlle. de Lussan will quit the Carl Rosa Opera company, with which she has been so long connected, at the close of the present season.

The grand stand to contain 10,000 singers for the coming saengerfest at the Madison Square Garden will be in the shape of an enormous fan, sixty feet in height. At the base of this structure will be placed the stage for the orchestra, so that each individual can see the movements of the musical director, who will have an unobstructed view of his entire forces.

It is reported that Mme. Modjeska has placed her ranch in southern California on the market, $25,000 being the price asked for it. Such a move on the part of the actress indicates that her severance from the United States will be complete. She will probably accept the artistic directorship of two national Polish theaters.

Justo Gonzales is a leading lawyer in Buenos Ayres. He was called upon to defend Mme. Tetrazzine, the famous South American prima donna, in a divorce suit recently. He charged her $800 for his services, but the money was not forthcoming and he obtained an order for the seizure of the lady's jewels. All the jewels turned out to be first-class paste.

William H. Crane's principal damatic production for next season will be "The Merry Wives of Windsor," in which he will play the role of Falstaff. Joseph Brooks, who attends to Mr. Crane's business affairs, is confident that the comedian will greatly improve his reputation as a comedian by means of the play. It will be brought out by the Star theater in New York in September.

A. M. Palmer's stock company, which has been a wanderer without a home all this season, and several times almost upon the verge of dissolution, will remain in New York next year and devote itself to the production of new plays. The season will open with Augustus Thomas' new play of Washington life, "The Capitol," which has been written expressly for Mr. Palmer. Palmer's theater will be reclaimed from its present uses and will be the home of the organization.

A DAY WITH THE SCHOOLS

Observations Made of Progressive Methods of Instruction.

MANY INTERESTING FACTS GLEANED

How the Young Idea is Taught to Shoot—Dismantled Condition of the Dodge Street School House—Some Gifted Pupils Mentioned.

The Park school is an interesting one—happy faces abound there. Not an overdressed or a shabbily dressed child can be seen in the entire building. All the rooms are well arranged respecting light, the seats being turned from the windows. Yet many of the little ones wear glasses, even in the kindergarten of the first grade.

The kindergarten is the brightest room of all. It holds seventy-one pupils and six teachers. The average age of the children is five years. All are neatly dressed, and some are pretty faced. Conspicuous among them is little Jaygee from Bombay. Little Jaygee's face is the darkest in the room, but his eyes are bright and his movements most graceful. The little ones are well trained and their obedience is marked. The director, Miss Morgan, is a patient, graceful woman, who seems to hold all their little hearts. She comes from Kansas City, and has devoted years of her life to the kindergarten system. Her assistant, Miss Wood, is a gentle, sweet-faced woman, and the four volunteers are doing good work. This room seems a paradise; it does not appear part of the cynical world the grown people live in. It is full of happiness and contentment. Each child's face bore the look of interest, but the teacher appeared the most interested one of all. They sang, and they talked of subjects which appeared dear to each little one there.

Each room had something new and of interest, but three were visited at times when exercises especially so were being held. In Miss Littlefield's room, fourth and fifth grade, pictures were being put on exhibition, and little heads were being taxed for stories appropriate to the subject portrayed. A gayly dressed little fellow, embracing a dog, was put on the wall, and the children told stories of the picture according to their own imaginations. Few of them would succeed in the modern school of fiction, for their plots were definite and all tales had a moral. The geography class was an interesting one. Mexico was the country being studied, and curiosities were on exhibition. A colored whip was one, and there were several pieces of workmanship by Mexican convicts, all of unique description.

In Mrs. Ware's room, sixth grade, is a map without a duplicate, for this map originated in Mrs. Ware's head. It is a large map of the United States—that far it is like all others. Upon each state or group of states the teacher and pupils have fastened the chief productions. Running through Illinois, Iowa and into Nebraska is a string of corn—"the corn belt." Upon the face of western Nebraska is a collection of cattle. From the western states of mineral wealth little pieces of different ore hang, even to gold and silver. The lake states, Iowa and Pennsylvania, too, hold little coal nuggets. A piece of cotton runs through Georgia and Alabama. From the Carolinas hangs a tiny bottle filled with rice grains. Tobacco, too, was there. Wheat was seen to the north. New England surpassed them all. Little boots and little shoes, a little watch and small pieces of different cloth were shown. Little ships and a litle bundle of small, very small, boards hung from Maine. A tiny bottle of crude petroleum was suspended from Pennsylvania.

In Miss Reed's room, the seventh grade, was the bulletin of a fierce battle. The battle ground was percentage, and the parties fighting for supremacy were girls against boys. It is a six days' engagement; four days have passed, and so far the young lords of creation are in the background.

In Miss Duval's room, the eighth grade, is a piano and a class of well trained voices. The music rendered was classic. A selection from the oratorio of "Saul" by Handel was one of the most striking. There are boys old enough in this room to provide bassos, tenors and baritones. In Miss Alexander's room, the fifth grade, I heard the children sing. Miss Alexander gave the keynote from a pitch-pipe. The singing was good, and the room was in perfect order. In that school of twelve well filled rooms disorder nor neglect are not noticeable. The rooms are scrupulously clean. A twelve-horse power engine drives fresh air through the ventilating tubes.

In the different grades are found the following teachers: First, Miss Hungerford; second, Miss Newcomb and Miss McLaughlin; third, Miss Bartlett and Miss Byrne; fourth and fifth, Miss Littlefield; fifth Miss Alexander; sixth, Mrs. Ware; seventh, Miss Reed and Miss Dudley; eighth, Miss Duval.

DUPONT SCHOOL.

Dupont school stands on Twenty-ninth and Martha. It has neither shade trees nor turf, and the little ones play upon the cinder-covered grounds. There are many bare feet and blue calico dresses seen among them. Nearly every nation of Europe is represented there. They are cleanly kept children. The building stands much in need of renovating. The plastering is cracked and loose, halls and passages are cramped, and doors open at the most inconvenient places and knock against each other. The blackboards are poor. Two of the rooms are not well lighted—this is most noticeable in the first grade. There is city water in the yard, but the toilet rooms are not connected with the sewer. Everything is cleanly kept, which is not an easy task, for the finishing of the house is old and not of the best material. Very few parents have visited the school. The teacher of the first grade, Miss Lucy Evans, appears to have perfect control of the pupils. Her order is perfect, and she appears very successful in all things. In the second grade, under Miss Krebs, arithmetic was being explained in a very clear manner for such little heads. This teacher showed remarkable power in developing the understanding of the very young children under her charge. In the third grade I found the children committing to memory a song from Tennyson's "Princess." Their delivery was excellent for their ages. The teacher, Miss Mach, is a tall, graceful girl, who preserves excellent order. In the fourth grade, under Miss Norton, the children were reading. They evinced good training. The principal, Miss Robinson, teaches the fifth grade. She has no separate room for them. They study with the fourth grade and recite in a dingy little class room. Miss Robinson has many obstacles to overcome against which other teachers do not have to contend.

CASTELLAR SCHOOL.

The Castellar school has 590 pupils. The first floor is heated with stoves, the upper two with hot air. There are twelve well filled rooms, and the principal, Mrs. M. B. Newton, has much to do. Her school is well ordered and regulated. In the eighth grade the singing was exceptionally good, and the drawing of one little girl, Louise Kurtz, showed remarkable talent. In many of the rooms the pupils were collecting little museums. The study of frogs' eggs and tadpoles appeared a favorite one. In jars of water the eggs are put and the tadpoles hatched. None of them, so far, have reached an advanced state of development. The windows held plants in different stages of growth. In the fourth grade the seats are too small for the pupils, and their position was far from being a comfortable one. Two years ago one room was badly wrecked from lightning, and the partly demolished curtains are still hanging there. The kindergarten is, perhaps, the most interesting room in the school. The pupils are all under 6 years of age. The little ones sat very orderly at different tables, and all were interested in the work. Some were making squares with soaked peas and little sticks; others were making designs with blocks. Their pictures of "mothers' work" was a little gallery in itself. All the principal things which mothers do in the seven days of the week were portrayed with thread upon cardboard. For Sunday was a church, and, following in order, came tubs, irons, needles, shopping baskets, with a collection of cakes to represent the labor of Saturday.

The Castellar school is roomy, but the halls are not so arranged that the children can march out in regular order, as in many of the other schools in this city. The following are the teachers: Misses M. Boutelle, Neese, Etta Smith, Raymond, Armbruster, Vankuran, Ross, Ireland, Dacy, Shirley, Bennett and Mrs. Urian and Mrs. Randebush.

FARNAM SCHOOL.

Farnam school is one of the most crowded in the city. It has no kindergarten, and the grades go as high as the eighth. The pupils are all neatly, and some are fashionably dressed. Miss Littlefield's room, the first grade, is an interesting one. The boards are covered with her well-outlined drawings. One, "the Jumbo of sin," is quite unique. From this mystical picture one would judge Miss Littlefield to be a temperance woman. It is an elephant with tusks of whisky bottles; trunk, a curled pipe; its feet, huge cigars; its ears, grape leaves; and so on the monster is constructed. It is treading on human hearts, large and bleeding. Everything is in order, and arranged for the convenience of the little ones—slate sponges are attached to the right hand side of the desks, and pencils are kept in a large bag at the left. The pupils appear very fond of the teacher, and presents, candy and cut flowers are some of the testimonials. In the second grade, under Mrs. Garrett, the plainness of the pupils' handwriting was noticeable. The fourth grade had some objects of interest. Dampened sand is used for modelling purposes, and the boys have a study in natural history. It is a colony of ants, kept in a large covered box, half filled with earth. In many of the rooms little museums are collecting. Some of the specimens are of value. I noticed the old system of spelling. The pupils stood in a row, and went up and down in rank, according to their merit. In the sixth and seventh grades they were writing compositions. The theme was "The Pilgrim Fathers." In the midst of correct phraseology, remembered from the history, were the childish phrases of the pupils. The boys were the most original, but blots and finger prints were common upon their papers.

The Farnam contains a teachers' training school. There are at present four cadets under Miss Wyckoff. Until the present year the cadets were changed every ten weeks, but after Miss Wickoff's tour through the eastern training schools another plan was adopted, to change them every five months.

Farnam school contains thirty-two colored pupils. The principal, Miss Truland, believes that the colored children should have schools of their own. In her opinion they require a different course of study and of discipline.

Another point of interest is the vertical system of handwriting, which has lately been adopted as an experiment in Miss O'Connor's room, third grade. Since the World's fair this system of writing has attracted much notice in educational circles. Nearly all the display of the Canadian schools were so written, and the legibility was marked. From the specimens seen at the Farnam school one would judge very favorably of this system. Its marked feature is its legibility. Pupils who have been noticeable for their cramped handwriting have been so made to write very plainly. The advocates of the system also claim that it is the most natural position for the penman to take.

DODGE SCHOOL.

Dodge school was not in the best condition to be judged, for the higher grades were all under examination. This school has a male principal, Mr. W. H. Allen. It is a difficult school to manage, and Mr. Allen has more obstacles to overcome than the ordinary principal. There is no kindergarten and the grades do not go above the seventh. Many of the pupils are colored, and others come from opposite corners of Europe, Russia and Italy. Moses and George Washington stand beside each other in class. Dark olive complexions, large luminous eyes and curling hair predominate, the faces having a dark, fiery charm not found in American children.

The state of the school building is deplorable—dark, dingy and dirty from use. The walls were once papered, but now this covering hangs down in long soiled strips. The windows are not many, and the light which should pass through them is held back by the heavy foliage of the surrounding trees. Some of the rooms, the first grade especially, are dark enough to ruin the pupils' eyesight. There are gloomy halls and poorly lighted passages.

The teacher of the first grade maintains order under the most trying circumstances; it is a restless school of very young and careless pupils. In the second grade the teacher was giving a writing lesson—she wrote commands upon the board and the pupils addressed obeyed. One little fellow named Hyman was called to the front, and then the teacher wrote "Esther, take Hyman to his seat." A little girl pouted one moment, and slowly came forward, placed one hand against Hyman's back and pushed him toward his seat. She went to her own, and sat some minutes with her head upon her arm.

Miss Evans has a restless charge on her hands, but her order is good. In the rooms of Miss Milroy and Miss McKnight little could be judged, owing to it being the time for examinations. Mrs. Kean's room, fourth grade, is one of the most orderly in the city schools; no noise, no buzzing nor threats of punishment can be heard there. When the children asked the teacher how they should arrange their examination papers she answered: "Make them look the way you think the nicest."

"I try to develop their individuality," she said, when speaking of her work.

There are wonderful voices in that room. They sang one song with remarkable spirit, and the closing refrain, "The louder you call John, the sounder he will sleep," was understood by each little one. Two little colored boys, Ellis Glover and Fred Thomas, are wonders. Ellis is remarkably bright, and he and his sister are noted for the power and beauty of their voices. As for Fred, he is a composer, not a poor one either. Fred's genius is remarkably prolific. Each morning he brings to his teacher a melody he composed the previous evening. Those competent to judge say these melodies possess real worth, both for beauty and originality. Fred's friends have great hopes for him. One little Italian girl bids fair to become a great artist. In the Dodge school there is a vast amount of shabby clothing, but there are also bright and original children.

THE THEATERS.

Alexander Salvini, the embodiment of the ideal romantic actor, will appear at Boyd's new theater for three nights, commencing Monday, May 14, in a repertoire that will consist of "The Three Guardsmen," "Ruy Blas" and "Zamar."

When Salvini commenced his career as a star in this line of work there were a great many who predicted a short life to his ambitious purposes. They said that the era of romance was dead; that the dress suit and kid glove had succeeded the doublet and hose; that climaxes were now punctuated with a puff from a cigarette, instead of a sword thrust. They preached the doctrine of repression, and smiled pitifully upon the the enthusiasm of this buoyant young man, who not only dared brave the revolution in ideas, but attempted to tread in the footsteps of that idol of the romantic drama—Charles Fechter.

Meanwhile Salvini pursued his course, uninfluenced by the croakings, until he stands before the public possibly as great a favorite as ever was Fechter. His voice is a clarion call, his actions like the unfurling of banners in a breeze. He sweeps all before him like a torrent; he makes his audience vibrate; their eyes dance and blood tingles to their finger tips. It is by this realization of the imagination that Salvini has achieved his success. He thrills his auditors with a life that is not real, but which fills them with an unquestioning delight for the falsehoods that are loved, as the child loved his Santa Claus or Mother Goose.

The dispassionate dissection of social conditions and theories that flood the stage now-a-days grows pale and impotent beside the virility of this passionate young Italian's magnificent pictures, and one turns with a sigh of relief from the vitiated, over-perfumed atmosphere of the Second Mrs. Tanqueray's budoir to the free, invigorating air and deep blue skies of sunny Spain and France, where lovers love with their hearts instead of their minds; where romance is in the air and natural conditions exist. It is this which makes Salvini and his plays so popular. The arrangement of the repertoire will enable the theater goers to judge Salvini's abilities from their different standpoints. Following "The Three Guardsmen," which will be seen Monday night, comes a special production of Victor Hugo's masterpiece, "Ruy Blas." The role of the melancholy, ambitious valet has always been a favorite one with able actors, for although it teems with the very essence of romantic lore, it offers more opportunity for impassioned, fervid acting than those of the Dumas models. It is in the later scenes of the play, where tragedy reigns rather than romance, that Salvini is said to make his greatest efforts. It is in the success of such characterizations as Ruy Blas that will no doubt force Salvini into a career for which by heredity alone is his bent—that of tragedy, and tragedy of the most virile type. The engagement will terminate Wednesday night with a production of "Zamar."

"Zamar" is the work of Mr. Paul Kester. The scenes are laid in Portugal in the year 1521, in the days of King Manuel "the fortunate." The story tells that the old King Manuel first contracted a secret marriage with the queen of the gypsies, a numerous race at this time, from which union a son was born, who was named "Zamar." The boy is brought up in ignorance of his royal parentage, and, as in most stories of the kind, the king contracts another marriage with one of his own class, from which union another son is born, who afterwards becomes Joam III. The old king in his dying moments, though he has long lost trace of his gypsy wife, hears news of the presence of Zamar, with his band, in the vicinity of the royal palace. In a moment of contrition he sends for his first born to confer on him his parting blessing and confesses to him that he is his father. The confession is overheard by Zamar's half-brother, the apparent heir to the throne, who breaks in upon the scene, and, of course, causes high words. The old king, not wishing to bring scandal and revolution into the court, extracts from Zamar an oath that he will be satisfied to remain as he is, king of the gypsies, and consequently, of course, his half-brother succeeds to the throne. Directly the latter assumes power, fearing that Zamar will forego his vow, he proceeds to persecute the gypsies, with the main object of exterminating Zamar himself. From this prologue it can be imagined what a series of adventures, escapes and interwoven romances the author has infused into his theme.

Each of the plays will be presented on a scale of magnificence seldom, if ever, witnessed in Omaha, and the many characters illustrated by a company remarkable for its thorough organization. Among the principal members may be mentioned William Redmond, William Harris, John A. Lane, Miss Eleanor Mornetti, Augusta de Forrest and Maud Dixon.

The Calhoun Opera company opens a week's engagement at the Fifteenth Street theater this afternoon in Milloecker's "The Black Hussar," which will be repeated at each performance until Thursday evening, when Richard Stahl's pretty and romantic opera, "Said Pasha," will be given, followed Friday by Balfe's beautiful "The Bohemian Girl," Saturday matinee the always welcome "Mikado," and Saturday night "Said Pasha" will be repeated. It will be seen that the musical program has been well selected. "The Black Hussar" is a rollicking work, containing a host of spectacular features and novel and entertaining specialties. Stahl's "Said Pasha" contains two acts of charming music, rapid action and excellent comedy. "The Bohemian Girl," that charming, sentiment-stirring opera, is always a delightful and welcome feature, and there is an assurance that it will be presented in a most enjoyable way. Who has not seen the "Mikado" and listened with rapture to its entrancing melodies and gazed with delight on its pretty costumes and novel scenic effects? The repertoire is one to please all classes of theater-goers. The chorus will number thirty-five and the company's own orchestra, under the direction of Carl Martens, will not be the least attractive feature. A strong cast of principals will be seen as follows: Helen Lamont, prima donna, late of the New York Casino; Julia Calhoun, mezzo soprano, last season with Calhoun Opera company; Sylveater Cornish, contralto, formerly with DeWolf Hopper and Isle of Champagne Opera company; George Lyding, primo tenor, last season with Miss Helyet; Frank Redsdale, primo baritone, late of the Calhoun company; Douglas Flint, comedian, with the Calhoun Opera company last season; Beatrice McKenzie, soprano; Cora Levett, contralto; Herbert Walters, Joseph Danton, tenors; Otis B. Thayer, Fred Salcomb, baritones; the Sisters Braccee, dancers; chorus of thirty-four, the company's own orchestra, under the direction of Carl Martens.

Popular prices will rule during the engagement.

The attraction at the Fifteenth Street theater for one week, commencing next Sunday matinee, will be the Clark & La Rose High Class Vaudeville company.

There has been no expense spared in making this company a success and the theatergoers of Omaha should not fail to see this attraction, as it consists of some of the best well known artists on the stage.

It is headed by the famous Brothers La Rose, who were the attraction at the Elks benefit in this city, and they also have the following well known vaudeville artists: Miss Arnold, black-face male impersonator; the three Seymours, fun in an opium den; Bennett and Lewis, sketch artists; Harry Alberti, the famous European juggler; Murphy and Raymond, Irish comedians; Miss Lewis, refined dancing; the Robinsons, vocalists; Jack Rall, who made quite a large reputation in this city some six or eight months ago; Pauline and Lee, refined sketch artists, and a number of other well known vaudeville stars.

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