

Amusements

With Buffalo Bill's Wild West show across the river on Tuesday, Ringling Brothers' circus here on Friday and a new line of attractions at Krug's park, local amusement lovers doubt they'll have time to keep them occupied despite the fact that none of the theaters was open.

The cool evenings which have made life worth living in the last few days and which do not usually manifest themselves until early in September, may be the means of causing the Orpheum to open its doors a week sooner than expected and in all probability Sunday, August 26, will see the initial performance of "The First Weeks" vaudeville bill of the season of 1901-2.

Owing to the redecoration of the Boyd it would be impossible to hasten the opening of even its management were disposed to do so. With the Orpheum open the last week in this month, the boys are only two weeks away, being compelled to wait a month for the Boyd to open will not work such a hardship on theatergoers as a trifling pleasure to spend in parks and too pleasant to remain at home.

It has been definitely settled that Innes and his band are to appear here this season. The announcement is authorized by Mr. Innes' manager. This will insure a fine lot of good music. The boys and their numbers are almost legion in this city. Innes and his organization, now engaged at the Pan-American exposition, are distinct in their class. They need little introduction to Omaha people since they made themselves so popular at the Trans-Mississippi exposition in 1898, when they played an extended engagement. There is no other band just like this organization.

It so arranged that it gives sympathy music and drama. The boys are certainly something doing in the vaudeville realm.

Combining Events.

Dalbey's band at Manawa is becoming more popular every day. This excellent concert band under the masterly direction of Mr. C. W. Dalbey, has attained that smooth, precise style of playing which is so desirable and seldom found in bands. Mr. Dalbey is a musician of great talent, but quiet and unassuming in his ways. His band has never had a rehearsal since the first of June, playing the most difficult pieces in public for the first time. He has that wonderful knack of keeping his men together, encouraging, supporting and leading them. He is so confident, so that every member plays with ease and grace. The men say they can play more and better for Dalbey than for any director they ever played with. One of the band's latest favorites is a selection from "The Runaway Girl" which has been out first copy for a relation from the London publishers. The band has many admirers among the music lovers. Some have never missed an evening concert since the band opened at Manawa. One commendable feature of this band and one that is very encouraging is that a large majority of the members of this organization have permanent homes in Council Bluffs and Omaha. An excellent program will be given this afternoon.

The next annual picnic of the letter carriers will be held at Krug park on Thursday, August 23. The committee of arrangement has received proposals from a number of out-of-town resorts, but will not attempt to keep the event at home. Upon investigation it found the facilities for handling big crowds, the equipment for a day's enjoyment, including high-class amusement, very good at the Krug and are sure nothing will be left undone to make a big success.

The latest improvement contemplated at Krug park is a plunge to accommodate about 500 bathers, the water supply to be furnished by artesian wells and heated by steam so that it can be kept at a desirable temperature for a long season. It would unquestionably be well patronized, as thousands of men and women would welcome the installation of a plunge with a good supply of clean water.

Krug park will hold forth today with a list of free attractions as large as any yet presented. The introduction of Chambers' Celestial choir in conjunction with the "Passion Play" has proved to be a very pleasing and successful innovation. During the presentation of appropriate scenes from "The Holy City," "Must Jesus Bear His Cross Alone," "Calvary," "Rock of Ages," "Nearer My God to Thee" and the "Christmas Carol" from "The Nativity" and as a prelude "Because He Loved His Mother So" and "Vesper Bells." These two religious offerings have attracted special attention and have been witnessed by many members of the clergy.

Of a letter from Lincoln I quote the following: "A private circle of musicians and music lovers had the pleasure of listening to C. F. Steckerberg and it was a rare treat. Selections from Mendelssohn, De Beriot, Grieg and Gounod followed each other in a beautiful, harmonious sequence. His perception of the spirit of the great masters seems to him to be intuitive. What he has to say to the audience is artistic abandon is really a masterful personal perception of the composition and his playing is so amalgamated with the soulful performance as a whole that it is almost overlooked in the emotional effect. Mr. Steckerberg, young as he is, is truly an original soloist and a true artist on his chosen instrument. He is at present paying his parents, in Lincoln, a short visit, preparatory to going to Chicago, from where, after a short stay, he will go to Europe to finish up his studies. We expect great things of the young artist and his friends hope to hear him in a farewell concert before going on his eastern journey."

THOMAS J. KELLY.

Dr. John Fiske.

ELKHORN, Aug. 9.—To the Editor of The Bee: Of late I have been reading a great many articles about Dr. John Fiske; how he plunged into Latin at the age of 7 and at 9 began reading Greek, and how at 12, when he should have been playing "shiny" with other boys of his age, he was devouring Virgil, Horace, Tacitus and a score of other old fellows; and, again, how he mastered German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Hebrew and Sanskrit before he was 18.

In truth it is an appalling list. It is but natural that an ordinary person should have the feeling that to have met him and talked with him would have been a grievous undertaking. But all this is a mistake. Now that the sad news of his death has come I am reminded of how I once met him in St. Louis at the home of Dr. G.—the famous oculist. The host and his wife were firm friends of Dr. Fiske's and at their house he spent many delightful evenings.

Now, in none of the accounts of the great historian have I seen it mentioned that he had a most musical baritone voice, mellow and strong. He sang as he did everything, fascinated, enchanted and unstintingly. On the evening when I was one of the company he began at 8 o'clock and sang till midnight—whole books of Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Rubinstein—all in the original German. If you are familiar with the "Tale of the Hammer" you remember that there are generally half a dozen duets just at the end. These we did together in English, I furnishing the soprano. They went off with large gusto, but the one which won the greatest applause was Mendelssohn's "Weyt" which he sang with me. Dr. Fiske was a huge man, and I was a slip of a girl just turned 15. We became rather excited, and the good doctor swayed like a kindly elephant as he poured forth the melody "My plaidie to the angry air, I'd abster thee, I'd shelter thee." I do not think that the people who were present at that little performance will ever forget it. I know I never shall.

Several years afterward, when I was in Stamford, Conn., at Miss Alken's school, Dr. Fiske lectured at the Stamford club house, and he sang some of his songs and rather fearfully and hesitatingly a little note had been sent him asking him to tea at the school, and to "please bring your music." Bless you! he was delighted, and came with an immense armful, and after supper sang some after songs in the big school until he was obliged to leave to catch his train for New York.

Dr. Fiske's singing "The Two Grenadiers" was a magnificent sight and a fine, stirring interpretation he gave that famous war horse.

He seemed to have no difficulties for him, and he sang the most bewildering songs with entire ease. His poor accompaniment was apt to have some bad moments. One who read indifferently might as well give up in the first place, for the good doctor exercised the prerogative of all great singers and led his accompanist a merry chase, now rushing the tempo like mad and again stopping a bit for breath and effect.

It is always interesting to know that a great man has his play time like the rest of us. That such a tremendous scholar as Dr. Fiske doted on a couple of songs in the big school until he was obliged to leave to catch his train for New York.

MARY D. LEARNED.

From Mr. Kelly's Understudy.

When I introduced myself to the public three weeks ago as the understudy of Mr. Thomas J. Kelly, musical critic

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And a word to the "Understudy." I cannot but express my deep sense of gratitude for the almost perfect adherence to the instructions given. I eagerly look for the Sunday paper to see what new thoughts are being advanced. There are a few technical terms which have been misplaced. No I distinctly told the "Understudy" to avoid technical terms as he would the plaque. But, like most beginners, I see he is rushing in where angels fear to tread. Technicality is a rock on which many an ambitious young writer has shattered his skill. And I grieve to see the tendency of my youthful disciple. I fear he has been reading "Tim Ormsby" or "Billy Baxter."

I am working on a lecture for next season entitled "Ragtime"; or, How I Came to Be Understudied."

Plays and Players.

Mauds Adams' London engagement will begin April 15, 1902.

Mrs. Signora Brown Potter is said to be writing her autobiography.

Both the "Theater" and "The Daily News" have been seen in rehearsal of "Richard Lovelace" August 12.

Beechhorn Tree is to produce Stephen Phillips' poem "The Soldier" and "The Star" next season, with Francis Wilson as the star.

Henry E. Dike will appear in the London production of "The Whirl of the Town."

Edie Elister is to play the title role in Stanislaus Stange's play, "The Working of Friscilla."

Isabelle Thompson has been engaged to supply Thomas G. Seabrooke in "A Modern Crusade."

Christine Nilsson (Countess di Maranda) is reported to be very seriously ill at her home at Gothenburg.

Charles Dalton will star next season in a comedy, "The Soldier," by Runkle and Lawrence Marston.

Henry Arthur Jones will visit New York during the coming season to supervise the production of one of his plays.

Anna Held says, through her press agent, that the coming season will be her last on the American stage, as she intends to act hereafter in the "Theater" and "The Daily News" and to build a home for herself in New York.

Alice Nielsen has made use of the columns of the "Theater" to express her thanks for the treatment accorded her in London. She was decidedly reticent regarding her treatment of her own company.

Sarah Bernhardt is at her summer residence, Belle Isle, France. Her son, Maurice Bernhardt, is now on an expedition with Henry K. Sienkiewicz's novel, "With Fire and Sword" that will be produced early next year.

Grace Kimball may return to the stage. She is married three years ago to a New York named Lawrence MacQuire. She was Sothern's leading lady in "The Prisoner of Zenda" and was also leading lady for Henry Miller in "Heart's Ease."

Pietro Mascagni has announced that his next opera will be based on a Russian text prepared for him by MM. Ullie and Giacomini, while Giuseppe Puccini is to rewrite "Edgardo and Lucia" in the form of the score intended for Belasco's version of "Mme. Butterfly."

The appearance in this city of James Jay Brady as special representative for Ringling Bros. calls to mind the fact that the circus of today is on a more elevated plane than ever before. In the old days the circus was popularly, although erroneously, supposed to be a place of amusement to go just to take the children. The name "James Jay Brady" is synonymous with high-class amusement and it was a lost for the circus business when Mr. Brady became connected with it. He has been in the show business ever since he was a young man and he has always stood high in the estimation of those who are identified with theatricals and has held prominent positions, one of which was manager of the "Century" of the most aristocratic theater in St. Louis. Brady

At last the association of vaudeville players which was organized last winter and which is known as the White Rats is to give up the ghost. The Washington Post recently said the following regarding this organization:

The last act in the comedy of the White Rats, the vaudeville players who tried to control the managers, was presented last week, when the organization decided to abolish the rule that prohibited Rats from looking engagements through regular agents. This removed the last vestige of the original plank of the brotherhood. It was formed, first, to compel managers to book acts through the White Rats' office and, secondly, to abolish the commission of 5 per cent charged by managers for booking acts. The managers promised to abolish the 5 per cent commission, but before they had a chance to do so the foolish strike of the White Rats was declared.

Note the result: First, the managers have shown their entire independence of White Rats and of vaudeville itself by booking stock companies and other organizations, such as will play at Chase's

We trust your grocer to sell Fels-Naptha soap, and give you your money back if you want it. It's our money and soap.

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Musical

MILWAUKEE, Wis., Aug. 9.—There is "nothing doing" in Chicago just now except the daily departure of hundreds of emigrants who flee from the walls and pavements to the many summer resorts within a few hours' sailing distance. The music on the boats is, of course, execrable, and I can assure you that from my personal observation there is a noticeable "tired feeling" toward the stuttering monotony of rattle music. My understudy will, I trust, do this full justice. The people are becoming restless and they want something new. What will it be?

There is a problem to think out. What will be the sort of the next few years? Anyone who cares to listen and notice can see that the syncretized "coon" song has had its day. I saw a remarkable instance of this the other night. I went to hear the Thomas men play a certain overture that I was interested in, the "King of Yvetot," by Adolphe Adam, that fine old classic French writer of generations long gone by. Incidentally, I cannot understand why this beautiful opus is not heard more frequently. Well, on the same program was a selection of "King Do-Do" music. The allegiance of Omaha people to King Ak-Sar-Ben is nothing as compared to Chicago's fealty to King Do-Do. It is a catchy musical comedy, two-act, to wit: the "Burgomaster," and so similar are the twigs that sometimes you can not tell them apart. The point of present interest lies in this, viz., that while there is some original and effective music written a la regie, it is merely listened to by the audience, but then the really fetching melody, that "Tale of the Hammer" which the audience goes wild. On the night referred to the composer, Lenders, happened to be present, with Pilsley, his librettist, and on invitation of Mr. Ulrich he conducted the personal personality. It was quite interesting.

Everyone in Omaha has heard the strains of the "Tale of the Kangaroo" and the "Bumblebee" is on the same order. A year or so ago these pretty little sketches would have been "passed up" in favor of the polster "rag" music. Cannot one see the trend?

It looks as though the popular song of the next few years will be on the order of the ones just mentioned. The graceful refrain in waltz rhapsody, or minuet form, is a growing one, and it is worth watching.

I heard the other day that a Kansas City man was negotiating for the appearance of the Thomas orchestra, with vocalists of national reputation, at the Omaha City and Omaha next season. I hope you can have this corroborated. My information, while meager, ought, from its source, to be authentic.

In this beautiful city of Milwaukee, the cleanest in the United States (I am told), I am staying for a few days. Last evening the party of which I am one made a trip to Whitefish bay. I wanted to be able to use the boatman's rod and transport the whole business to Duane St. There was a beautiful and beautiful quiet scenery. Your musical critic threw stones into the limpid depths, considering each stone a former enemy or enemy, and then, having seen them disappear, he contemplated the tranquil scene and thought of things to be developed and given to the patient reader of your music column next winter. Let me urge every Omahan visiting Chicago on business to take the lake trip on the Columbus. You can leave at 9:30 a. m., visit Milwaukee for a couple of hours, and in your hotel in Chicago at 10:30 the same night. The one day will furnish health and contentment and rest sufficient to equip you for a week's hard work. This is not a paid advertisement. I was obliged to pay my own way.

Mr. Kelly has closed his studio — Hours should be secured now for next season, which will formally open September 9th.

Artistic Singing

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Manhattan Beach from Six to Nine p. m. Daily.

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Grand Balloon Ascension, by King Murphy, Sunday Afternoon, at 6:30.

- Base Ball -
Today

Merchant's Browns vs. The Antiques, Omaha.

Game called at 3:30. This will be one of the hottest contests of the season. Admission to the grounds, 15 cents. No charge for reserved seats. Come early and avoid the rush, and get a good front seat. Manawa has the cleanest and best base ball diamond in the west.

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