

At the Theaters

RUTH WEBBER in "Mutt and Jeff" at the Brandeis



Joseph Jefferson at the Orpheum

SIX days of reflection merely serve to accentuate the first impression of the Aborn production of "The Bohemian Girl," an impression that was, perhaps, feebly expressed in the somewhat halting opinion that found itself more or less compressed by the restrictions of space and time allotted for the cursory review that followed the performance on Sunday evening. The more the matter is pondered upon, the more does the opinion grow that the horse that tried to kick the scenery to pieces at the close of the first act was inspired by almost human intelligence. He was at least acting with "horse sense," and had the Messrs. Aborn used as much in their own efforts, the whole would have been a great deal more satisfactory. So far as the scenic display itself in question, it occasions regret that the Elizabethan era has not been extended to these days insofar as opera is concerned. One recalls Sembrich, Caruso, and others singing at the Auditorium before a painted "drop," and a very feeble imitation of the outer edge of the place of Lammormoor, and only thinks of the glorious tones that rose on the notes of Donizetti's music. The scene—what of it? Was not there a wonderful display of vocal magnificence such as is rarely listened to? Then why should there be a scene at all? When Patti and Scatchi, and Nordica and Tanagnolo and the others were at the Coliseum—did any who were present at either of those memorable performances think to question if the courtyard of the castle of the Count di Luna were historically accurate, or even resembled a courtyard, or if any of the other stage settings approached in any way the "scene" intended? Hardly, and it is hardly likely that any of the crowds that packed that old building to listen to those songbirds can now recall if any scenery was used, but none of them have forgotten or ever will forget the magnificent splendor of the music they listened to. It would be a pleasure to write thus of the latest Aborn offering, but alas, that pleasure is not for us.

The over-elaboration of the scenic equipment of the company may or may not have been deliberately planned to lessen the effect of its lack in other essential regards; as a matter of fact, this very lavishness of scenic display served to heighten and increase the disappointment felt by those who expected to be served with a real treat. It was like sitting down in a great dining hall, surrounded by all that goes to make for gastronomical luxury, and then being served with a bit of red herring in lieu of the sumptuous banquet anticipated. With beautiful and costly stage settings, one looks for something uncommonly good in the way of acting, singing or whatever is to be displayed. Here the hope was certainly broken; the word of promise was forgotten. One does not like to set out upon a categorical exhibition of the faults of the performance, for they are too many. The great fault is, perhaps, the utter inability of the principals, with the single exception of Florin, who had the role of Devilshoof, to act. The efforts in the line of acting were painfully amateurish, showing a decided lack of knowledge of even the rudiments of the actor's art; this incapacity destroyed all semblance of beauty of the opera, and reduced it to a condition where it was

Alice Dovey and Hazel Dawn in "The Pink Lady" Coming to the Brandeis

neither opera nor concert, and set in the great mass of scenery and garnished with circus and vaudeville as it was, the incongruity was so apparent that what little good it might contain was lost in the generally ridiculous aspect of the whole. After seeing this production the feeling is to question the value of the compliment paid to Omaha by the Messrs. Aborn in employing a number of young Omaha singers for their organizations.

Adeline Genee, the Danish genius of terpsichore, who comes to the Auditorium with her own company and orchestra next Thursday evening, commenced to dance at the National theater in Munich at but 9 years of age. A few years later she took a really big part at the Royal opera house in Berlin, which engagement was followed by a stay in Copenhagen which gained the plaudits of the royalty of several nations, including the late King Edward. Miss Genee came to America just two years ago in "The Soul King." The brilliancy of her art captivated New York and though she has been seen in America but few times since her title, "queen of the dance," remains unmarred. Adeline Genee is tremendously popular in London, from where she came to open her American tour with a debut at the Metropolitan opera house, New York City, last November. Though Miss Genee was but recently married to an English lawyer, it is asserted that her art entirely governs her life. Every day demands at least two hours' practice in a room walled with mirrors; she is always well and never indulges in late suppers or wine. The Cosmopolitan (November) says: "Her dancing is the very quintessence of joyous poetry, charm and rhythm. The moment she first flutters a vision of pink with fairy-like lightness and the stage, she becomes the embodiment of idyllic joy. It is a treat to witness her twinkling entreechais."

The New York Sun of December 4, last says of her appearance at the Metropolitan opera house:

Miss Genee returns to New York with but a decrease in her skill or in her performance, which she imparts to her pupils. Her technical facility is still astonishing. She executes the most difficult feats of her art with marvellous rapidity and accuracy. There is no slurring or uncertainty in this respect she seems quite incomparable today.

Her dancing is another superlative quality that the dancing dancer possesses. Her final feat at the end of "Robert le Diable," when she slowly rose until one foot was in the air and she was standing on the toe of the other foot, was certainly a tour de force of classic dancing. The most of her movements have not been lost any of their irresistible charm since the first night she danced in this country. Miss Genee was first seen in "Le Camargo," in which she depicted an episode in the life of that famous dancer, who won such sudden fame by taking the place of one of the men dancers in the ballet of the opera. She is shown practicing her ballet steps, later as the successful ballerina on behalf of the young soldier with her friend, the king, and finally as the unhappy favorite, who really, in spite of her fame, knows no friends.

Miss Genee has never had such an opportunity to exhibit her talents as she has in the dance from her vacation cottages who stuck a pin into her down to the pathos of her loneliness. When her costume in this rocco interlude was beautiful. Exquisite taste indeed was the characteristic of this reproduction of a room in the palace at Versailles.

Alexander Villini, who danced with Miss Genee yesterday afternoon, was an altogether worthy associate. He is an uncommonly skillful dancer. He distinguished himself in the ballet movement from "Robert le Diable," as well as in his solo dancing. He leaped into the air with every appearance of great strength, but with no loss of grace.

He danced as a pierrot with Miss Genee, who added to the second part a very graceful and melodious waltz by Ferraro H. Tour. The ballet music from "Robert le Diable" brought the delightful performance to a close.

Miss Genee's program for Omaha includes a number of solo dances, as well as a series of beautiful ballets, in which she appears supported by her company. She carries her own orchestra, which makes certain of the dance music being properly played, as well as the concert numbers that are a part of the entertainment.

If all women stars were as tractable as Mollie Williams, this season heading her own company, what a pleasant life the managers would lead. Not content with doing two performances daily, including Sunday, Miss Williams gives further proof to Max Spiegel that placing her at



Mollie Williams - Gayety

the head of her own company was not wrong, by arising at 8 o'clock every morning and with eight of the fair choristers, devoting the entire morning to the distribution of "Spiegel Splashes," a little booklet extolling the merits of the Spiegel attractions. How many women stars in particular. How many women stars would do this? While the show was in Toledo, O., Miss Williams made a trip to one of the big factory plants; there about 8,000 people are employed, and at the noon hour, while the men were at lunch, mounted the seat of an automobile and gathered a crowd of about 3,000 around her and made a speech in the interest of her attraction. She also makes a speech at the conclusion of each performance, thanking those present for their attendance, concluding with (to quote Mollie), "If you like the show I want you to tell your friends. If you do not like it, go out and knock it." If this is not going after business with a vengeance, nothing is, and Max Spiegel is to be complimented for having the management of such a wonderful woman.

"The most famous cartoon comedy production extant," is pretty strong phraseology, but if you follow the career of "Mutt and Jeff" from its inception, you'll agree that there is no phrase of the English language too strong to describe the achievements of Bud Fisher's clever cartoon play. When Gus Hill secured the playrights, few people forebode the tremendous success to be achieved. Four companies of forty-five people each are now playing the piece in the four corners of the United States, and all are playing not only to capacity, but are creating records in

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Adeline Genee - At the Auditorium



Cecilia Novasio in Louisiana Lou At the Brandeis

every theater in which they appear. The entertainment offered is giving satisfaction—much is naturally expected from so famous a theme, "Gales of laughter," "bursts of merriment" begin with, the first appearance of these two funny fellows and continues throughout the two and one-half hours of hilarious fun. "Mutt and Jeff" will make a personal visit to the Brandeis theater for an engagement of three nights, beginning Sunday, February 2. It is hardly necessary to add that this is proving one of the big musical treats of the season, for such was the case last year. The company now appearing here is precisely the same that has been interpreting this delightful McLellan-Caryl play at the New Amsterdam theater in New York and during last spring and summer at the Globe theater in London. In the company are such favorites as Hazel Dawn, Frank Lolor, Alice Dovey, Alice Hageman, Jack Henderson, Louise Keller, Jed Prouty, Crauford Kent, William Clifton, Eddie Morris, Juanita Fletcher, Maurice Hageman.

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