

THEATRICAL NOTES

Thomas Keene played to a top-heavy house at the Lansing on Monday night. Mr. Keene is distinctly an actor of the old school, a school which has not felt the influence of realism or of that peculiarly modern movement which Ibsen's plays and Duse's acting best illustrates. Bearing in mind that Thomas Keene is keeping alive the traditions of a perishing system, that he represents the methods of another Keene and his contemporaries, of Forest and his dramatic ancestry, it is still difficult for a critic to convert to the school of Edwin Booth to do Mr. Keene justice. It is necessary for effective stage representation of any emotion or passion, to exaggerate it, just as a life-size figure on top of a column must be made several times life-size in order not to be dwarfed by the height. Mr. Keene's scale not being the same that actors as eminent as he now use, it takes the eye an appreciable time to accustom itself to the changed proportions.

His Louis XI was a dirty, vicious old man, suspicious of everybody and with

life. After that he can only repeat himself.

The company was very good. The only bit of character acting being by Lawrence Lowell, who played the Dauphin. Chas. Hanford as the Duke de Nemours had a stagey role and played it conventionally. The play is an historical drama, and does not detach itself by anything striking from the hundred or more I have seen.

Mr. Keene's make-up was extremely clever. It was impossible for the audience to discern where the man ended and the make-up began. In the brightest light he was the exhausted result of unrestrained vice and a mean soul.

We have been trained to expect pretty women with forms not too prudishly concealed, but Keene addresses himself to the intellect alone in Louis XI. The feminine temptations in his company were reduced to the minimum in number and quality.

"The Brownies" played at the Lansing for two nights and a matinee to



Mr. John E. Henshaw.

no notions about "the divine right of kings." He grovelled at the feet of priests and assassins with a superstitious and physical fear utterly lacking in royalty. To be sure, before Louis eleventh's time the King of France was merely an overlord, and the historical Louis was a coward, but within a narrow range he had absolute power. The habit of power lends a dignity and a royal bearing even to canaille like Louis. Keene's Louis is never a King. On his throne, surrounded by soldiers, he is the meanest of them all. Choking, gasping, screaming throughout the play, he leaves himself no climax. Physical expression can go no further than when, in the first act, he entreats the priest for breath and long

fairly good business. Three successive performances will include nearly all the theatre-going public of Lincoln. In this case the number was augmented by the number of children who went to see what Palmer Cox has made as fascinating as Mother Goose. These were disappointed. There was nothing of the quaintness and the charm which fascinates or that peculiar quality which makes the Christmas pantomime beloved of children, in "The Brownies." The company was very large. Among them were three possessing talent, the wonderful contortionists, Newhouse and Waffle, and little Ida Mulle. Newhouse and

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