

THE THEATRE

Last Thursday the Oliver was opened by Madame Helene Modjeska and her large company in Cleopatra. The house was filled with a brilliant audience among which were those who had seen Madame Modjeska play many parts. As Cleopatra she was lissome and graceful and her costumes were gorgeous and of superb color but she was not Cleopatra. Not that it mattered, whatever Modjeska plays she makes the heart beat with the sweet cadence of her voice and her enrapturing womanliness. The company was costumed in exquisite taste and most richly. The scenery was very elaborate and beautiful. The support was exceptionally good, especially the leading man who played Antony, and the two little Egyptians, Iris and Charmian. The subjoined tribute to Modjeska is taken from "The Passing Show" by Miss Cather, published in this paper last March:

In New York I went to see Modjeska in "Mary Stuart." I had not seen her for six years and I was almost afraid to go—afraid that she might have changed too greatly. She has changed, indeed, but only as a flower from which the rains have washed the brilliance of its color, or as an antique marble which time has ravaged but never lost its high significance. The old poetic charm, the old regal manner are still hers. To me there has always been something of the mediaeval in this woman, something of that spiritual fineness and delicate reserve which the age of chivalry bred in women; something of that dignity which walked between the shadow of the cloister and the effulgence of the court, something that accords with the mellow notes of the flute, something that belonged to the days when men thought a woman's love worth sacrifices, and pilgrimages, and hard fought battles, like the Holy Grail or the sepulcher of Christ. When I see her play I can understand how Dante loved Beatrice for a life-time, and how Petrarch sang of Laura in a dungeon, how knights of old died to kiss their mistresses' hand, how the old chateaux, believing in the virgin, caught on their own brows the resplendent light that shone about Mary's head and became to men, mediators with God rather than ministers of pleasure. Idealism lived in men until it died in women.

To step from the sordid, blatant, naked materialism of such plays as "The Tree of Knowledge" and "The Conquerors" into this woman's presence is to enter another world, a world in which the imagination soars rather than that in which the senses riot. You remember it was just the same whatever the play. If her Camille was too refined, it was because poetry cannot be gross, and a queen cannot be common. Ah! the pity of it that this woman must grow old! Never, surely, did we so need such serenity of soul as her's, never before did we so need to have life set to music. Her's is indeed the charm which age cannot wither nor custom stale.

There is no woman on our stage today who can read blank verse as she can. The technical perfection of her reading, despite her accent, always awes me a little. The metre never hampers her; she handles it as freely as prose. Her sentiment is of the kind that is most naturally expressed in verse. When she needs breath she pauses and takes it rather than slur a spondee or hurry a line to its end. Ah, Lady, when shall we look upon your like again? Our world is given over to Anna Held and Julia Opp and Maude Adams and their kind, to daughters of joy and brazen incompetence and china playthings. Cordelia, stay a little!

Last Friday at the Funke Charles Dickson, Henrietta Crossman and Nanette Comstock in "Mistakes Will Happen" played to a moderate business. This company of nine are artists everyone. Their performance was finished. The perfection of workmanship was not lost on those who were there but they should have played to standing room only. It is rare indeed that so good a play and so good a company appear here. Reproaches are frequently addressed to the theatre managers that they do not get the best here. Well the best was at the Funke last Friday and lacked a representative audience. The Lincoln

public responds to a name of extra-familiar fame like that of Modjeska, Joe Jefferson or Crane, but when a company composed of the best modern actors arrives we are not sufficiently acquainted with the modern stage to take an excellent performance for granted. In consequence actors of acknowledged prestige have played to poor houses in Lincoln, and to tell the plain truth the place is not popular with them.

The other members of the "Mistakes Will Happen" company are Charles Harbury, William Hawley, Franklin Garland, Edmund Lawrence, Ben Deane, Adah Eckert and Carrie Behr. Carrie Behr's song and dance with Edmund Lawrence made a hit worth chronicling. Henrietta Crossman was graceful, quick witted, and coquettish as she always is. Nanette Comstock is charming. Her mellow voice vanquishes what defenses her beauty leaves, and she uses it as Maude Adams does—to stay. Mr. Dickson has the cool, nonchalance that William Gillette has made popular.

Oliver theatre patrons are delighted with the new curtain whose soft blue draperies forever conceal the horrid old witches and the fountain of youth which was impossible in drawing and color. The sallow old women are painted out and the new picture soothes where the old irritated. It is unfortunate that the artist has chosen to paint his name so large on one of the marble steps in the picture. Artists generally place their names in the corner of the picture where it harmonizes with the composition and must be searched for by an admirer. The sign on this curtain is a blot and should be placed less conspicuously in a corner.

The "Gay Matinee Girl" on Thursday and "A Milk White Flag" on Saturday were of mediocre merit in cast and play. The Milk White Flag besides the usual Hoyt coarseness has a repulsive plot. The corpse is a swindler, his wife is a wretched cheap imitation, the other women are only a shade better and the men are not members of good society. In the whole play there is not a character we would like to know. It is the work of a man without delicacy and without respect for humanity.

An Eclipse, which can be seen with the naked eye, will occur Monday, Oct. 24th, at 8:15 p. m. at the Funke opera house, when the Warner Opera company, the society favorites, will give their initial performance. This company is, without a doubt, the strongest company touring the west this season, universally extolled as wearing the purple of superiority. They have selected from their choice repertoire of plays, O. E. Holburn's masterpiece, the beautiful four act comedy, "Mercie's Marriage," as their opening bill for Monday night, scened in the most extravagant manner. Gorgeous costumes and every attention paid to detail. Don't fail to see Cora Warner, the world's greatest illusion dancer in her bewildering serpentine, fire and lily dance with all the very latest electric and calcium light effects. Also beautiful illustrated songs at each and every performance. Prices 1c, 20 and 30 cents, with ladies free Monday night under usual conditions. Rush for seats.

We present in the advertisement an outline cut of Louise M. Brehany, the famous prima donna of the Louise Brehany Ballad and Opera company, who are soon to favor us with a visit. She has gained a national reputation through her success with Sousa's Band, the Chicago Marine Band, Edouard Remenyi, Bernard Listemann company and other great organizations, and this year heads her own company, giving an act of the grand opera Martha in costume in addition to a regular concert program.

THE OLIVER THEATRE

JNO. DOWDEN, Jr., Manager.

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THE

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She is a famous ballad singer; in fact, she is considered the best in America, and has for her support some renowned artists. This will be a rare musical treat and should be largely attended, as it is a rare thing for our music loving citizens to hear a portion of any opera by such singers. Secure seats at once at Box office. At the Oliver Monday, October 24. Prices—\$1.00, 75c, 50c, 25c.

MUSICAL MENTION.

Mr. Henry Eames and wife will be located at Mr. Paul Bartlett's new residence on H street.

The Cadet band will furnish the music at the afternoon exercises of the dedication of the Mechanic Arts building and the orchestra and male quartette in the evening.

Among the new arrivals at the School of Music this week were Lulu Wonder of Blue Springs, Susanna Ashmun of Atchison, Kansas, and Eva Comstock of Neligh, Nebraska.

The University School of Music has engaged the eminent pianist, Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler, for a recital on December 3d. Madame Zeisler has not visited Lincoln and is known as the greatest American woman pianist.

On Wednesday evening, October 19th, at the University chapel the first artist recital of the series of 1898-9 was given by Mr. Henry Eames, who has recently been secured as the head of the piano department of the university school of music. Mr. Eames comes from Chicago with many flattering notices both as regards his musicianship and social standing. The program he presented was a severe one, calculated to test the various qualities of touch and technic which the artist possesses, and it was given from first to last with a degree of intelligence and virtuosity that will make Mr. Eames' future appearances of pleasure to all. We should be glad to hear Mr. Eames in a program of popular numbers and understand that he expects to give such a program in the near future. The following is the program presented:

Handel—Theme and variations, E major.

Beethoven—Sonata, C minor, Opp 13. Grave-Allegro. Adagio. Rondo.

Gluck-Joseffy—Air de Ballet.

Rachmaninoff—Prelude, C sharp minor.

Grieg—The Birds. The Brook. March Funebre.

Schumann—Faschingschwank. Op. 26. Allegro.

Chopin—Nocturnes, C sharp minor and F major. Waltz, C sharp minor. Three short preludes. Prelude, D flat major. Etude, C minor.

Brahms—Intermezzo E flat. Ballade D minor.

Liszt—Rhapsodie Hongroise, No. 15.

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