

Plays and Players Here and Abroad



Vivian Rushmore with "The Lady of the Slipper" at the Globe



Priscilla Knowles in benefit of volunteer Fresh Air Fund and French Day Nursery at the Century Theatre

May Wirth Equestrienne at the Bailey-Circus

Laura Nelson Hall in "The Poor Little Rich Girl" at the Hudson



Jane Grey and Francis Byrne in "The Conspiracy" at the Garrick Theatre

FROM AN ORCHESTRA CHAIR

Napoleon in Drama, Musical Comedy and Grand Opera. Revivals and the Question of Their Proper Season—"Rosedale."

The mass of books about Napoleon, historical and romantic, biographies, memoirs, studies, researches, inventions and fiction, in all languages of the world, long since all but outgrown the resources of the most competent of bibliographers. There is in existence a library dealing with each and every phase of his life and career, private and public, from his beginnings to his love affairs, from his beginnings at Brunelle to the influence of falling health upon the clarity of his master mind.

It might be worth while—some day it may be done—to compile a bibliography of all the theatrical productions, dramas, melodramas, spectacles and musical plays whose hero he is, or, if not their hero, at least their "deus ex machina." Of one-act plays alone there must be hundreds. Shaw's "Man of Destiny" is the best known of them all, but the tourist in Europe is constantly coming across them in the theatres of the Continent. And no wonder, for the character must always appeal to ambitious playwrights and players. The famous German actor Horn produced a Napoleon play of his own, in one act, at the Irving Place Theatre here some years ago. It served to suggest that, whatever Napoleon's dramatic possibilities, those of his impersonation by the actor on the stage have decided limitations. Historically, the Man of Destiny has only two poses—his right hand stuck into his breast, or both hands clasped behind his back. And always he must bend his head, and glower upward through his eyebrows.

Harrison Brockbank's Napoleon in "The Purple Road," at the Liberty Theatre last Monday night, showed that he was familiar with these traditions of the role, but it showed more beneath the uncertainty of a first appearance, namely, a clear perception on his part of further possibilities in the role. For one thing, he indicated the intense strain under which the world conqueror must have lived. All this is not of prime importance in a musical comedy, of course; still, the part is worth playing well, for all there is in it beyond the music, the more so as it was originally written for one of the greatest singing actors the operatic stage has ever known. Of course, Napoleon must be a barytone musically. One feels it. He can be neither tenor nor bass, the latter in this case being the treacherous Talleyrand, though the even more treacherous Fouché might seem to have the first right to it. Of course, Napoleon belongs in the grandest of grand opera if he is to be dramatized at all, which leads one to wonder whether a grand opera on the subject has ever been written—on a really worthy of his grandeur, that is. Next year, so it is announced, we shall have an opportunity at the Metropolitan to see what Giordano has made of it in his "Madame Sans-Gêne," whose Napoleon will be a barytone, of course.

However, Austertitz leads Napoleon to

Schoenhausen in "The Purple Road," and his adventure there serves to bring the Austrian peasant girls, Wanda and Kathi, and the Austrian soldier-dentist-comedian, to Paris and the Tuilleries, to the accompaniment of a most pleasingly melodious score. What more can one ask of musical comedy? It is inviting music, with its constant waltz motifs, and it is set to a libretto that is well constructed, and has an intelligible plot. Valli Valli and Eva Fallon are pleasing to behold as well as hear. Edward Martindel's descent down the scale à la "Magic Flute" is a welcome surprise, and the dancing is graceful.

A new play by an unknown author appears to be not nearly so incalculable a speculation in the theatrical world as is a revival of an old favorite, be it drama or musical comedy. Americans are always in search of some new thing, they have but little inclination to look backward on the road traversed, least of all in the matter of their amusements. If they like a new production they will go to see it time and again while it is new; but when the opportunity is offered to them to renew their first delight their enthusiasm has cooled, and—there are new productions of the moment to be seen, inferior often, but having that one great American merit of being new. Again, it is the spring the best season for theatrical revivals? The vim of the anticipations of fall has weakened, the enthusiastic theatre-going habit of winter has flagged. There are other new things coming; the things of a new season. In this matter of keeping successes alive in the theatre, Europe offers a striking contrast to this country. There the operettas of Millocker and Suppé, as well as of Johann Strauss, of Offenbach and Planquette, plays like Sudermann's "Magda" and Meyer-Forster's picturesque "Old Heidelberg" are produced year after year, once their first season has established their value. And they never seem to lose their interest for theatregoers. No immigrant opera company touring South America has had some of these gems of the lighter musical Muse in its repertory. No Continental theatre of any pretension but revives such plays from time to time. Thus the younger generation is enabled to acquire a consecutive knowledge of the dramatic art of its own and other nations, but, as we are told on an average of once a week, they take their drama seriously over there. And their good lighter music as well.

"Rosedale," though, no doubt, a revival in the strict sense of the word, is in reality a new play to so great a majority of present-day theatregoers that it should thrive on our very love of hearing something new. In technical ways it "dates," to be sure, and for that reason huzzey-amused a first-night audience, but, honestly, it is better constructed than a good many novelties of the passing season. It many novelties of the passing season, it is well acted, from the imperturbable ser-

iousness of Mr. Glendinning and the melodramatic vigor of Mr. Warwick to the delicacy of the love scenes between Eddie Ferguson and Charles Cherry, and last but not least, there is something fascinating about a plot the keeps on going although everybody overhears everybody else. The play revealed to the onlooker the nascent picturesque qualities of the manners and the dress of the womanhood of the long-dead mid-Victorian era.

Much theatrical history has been written apropos of "Rosedale" since its revival last Monday. One of the greatest popular successes of its period and author, it was not, we have been told, even a moderately good average specimen of the drama of its day. But we have retained, thanks to the limitations of time, the usual references to the superior acting of those good old days. Invitations to try to imagine what Lester Wallack must have made of the part of Elliot Grey do not appeal to us. Ample sufficient to this revival of "Rosedale" is the acting thereof by the excellent company brought together by Mr. Brady. May they command the success which their work in this revival deserves.

IN VAUDEVILLE

At Least One Strong Lure at Each Leading House.

That variety is the spice of life will be borne in upon the most skeptical at a casual survey of the "two-a-day" bills for the week. There is no reason why the sources of so much that is novel and entertaining should show signs of exhaustion.

ALHAMBRA.

Nat M. Willis, "The Happy Tramp," will head the programme at Keith's Alhambra Theatre for the coming week. Others on the programme include Eddie Leonard and Mabel Russell, in songs and dances; Kate Ellipse and Sam Williams, in "The Hunter and the Hunter-ess"; Dr. Carl Herzman, in electrical experiments; Walter Law and company, in "The Seal of Silence"; Eight Madcaps, dancers; Mayo and Aldman, singers; Gaultier's Animated Toyshop, De Voie Trio, acrobats.

BRONX.

"Rosedale," though, no doubt, a revival in the strict sense of the word, is in reality a new play to so great a majority of present-day theatregoers that it should thrive on our very love of hearing something new. In technical ways it "dates," to be sure, and for that reason huzzey-amused a first-night audience, but, honestly, it is better constructed than a good many novelties of the passing season. It many novelties of the passing season, it is well acted, from the imperturbable ser-

COLONIAL.

A signal engagement for vaudeville is Kitty Gordon, late star of "The Enchantress," who will come to Keith's Colonial Theatre this week. She will be seen in selections from her greatest successes. This will be Miss Gordon's debut in the two-a-day houses, for which purpose she has ordered some wonderful gowns. Other acts here will include Isabelle d'Armand and Frank Carter, who will make their first appearance since returning from European triumphs; "The Trained Nurse," with Clark and DeGman and a big company.

FIFTH AVENUE.

At Proctor's Fifth Avenue Theatre the march of progress continues uninterrupted. Dual headliners will be offered in the engagement of Billy B. Van and company, in "Progs," and the original Russian Balalaika Orchestra of fifteen pieces. The former attraction calls for the services of thirty-three people and a smart dog, the tabloid musical comedy moving with rapidity and finesse through a maze of fun and melody, while the latter drawing card will be under the direction of Vladimir Pogoreloff, the talented young conductor composer.

HAMMERSTEIN'S.

William Hammerstein will present at the Victoria Theatre the coming week a bill consisting of sixteen vaudeville acts, headed by the first presentation in this country of the vampire dance, interpreted by Bert French and Alice Eldon. The vampire dance is founded on Rudyard Kipling's famous poem and Burne Jones's famous painting of the same name. Mr. Hammerstein has had built

for this presentation a complete scenic production, and every detail will be just as it was presented by French and Eldon for six months at the Hippodrome in London. In addition to this feature James and Bonnie Thornton will make their reappearance here as a team for the first time in five years.

PALACE.

Sadie Fisher, who won stellar honors in musical comedy, will be the headliner at the Palace Theatre, beginning Monday matinee, April 14. Miss Fisher has been appearing on tour in a new vaudeville act, and this will be her first vaudeville appearance in New York. She appears in six different songs, each time attired in a different costume, representing a different period in the national history, and the songs are characteristic of the period. Another headliner of the "Man with Three Wives." He will appear with his company in a musical skit, called "The Moving Picture Man." Beatrice Oxford and her four elephants from Berlin will give a wonderful exhibition of the intelligence of these gigantic pachyderms. Marie McFarland, and Madame Z. the Masked Soprano, will be one of the feature acts.

UNION SQUARE.

Under the white tons of the great circus of this country there has scarcely been offered a more remarkable exhibition of horse sense than that found in the performance of Herr Herzog's eight beautiful stallions that come to Keith's Union Square Theatre this week. The comedy end will be handled by Willard Summs, assisted by Miss Marguerite Luchier and Eugene Robinson, presenting the funny skit entitled "Flinder's Furnished Flat."

CAPUS'S "HELENE ARDOUIN"

A Daring New Departure in French Drama—Ibsen and Russian Influences in Its Construction and Dialogue—Critics and Public.

Paris, April 5.—Alfred Capus's new play, "Helene Ardouin," at the Vaudeville, where it was put on after the exceptionally long run of Sacha Guitry's "La Prise de Berg-op-Zoom" is particularly important on account of the celebrity and exceeding popularity of the author. The play itself is even more interesting from a literary than from a practical point of view. It is not a bit like a French play. Whether it indicates a deliberate departure from French dramatic tradition or not in a general way is a matter of opinion. It unquestionably shows the effect, on one of France's subtlest and finest writers, of elements that were discovered for the drama far outside of France. It is a melancholy love story in common and dull surroundings, filled with common and dull people and one strong personality, and he a youth. It is realistic in machinery and romantic in intent. It is seldom artificial. It is lifelike, for a wonder! The plot is terribly simple. The people move with an astonishingly true stupidity, and there is a death at the end—the heroine herself dies. No man less clever than Capus could have dared to do all this in the contemporary French theatre, and in the slang phrase, have "got away with it."

FOREIGN INFLUENCES.

To a foreigner the play is not queer, as it is to Frenchmen. It reminds one of Russian things, of Russian life, the Russian spirit, of Russian methods of work. There is, too, perhaps a little more of straight Ibsen in "Helene Ardouin" than in any other French play of recent years. In most French plays nowadays the influence of Ibsen is diluted and mixed with other influences. It comes indirectly, through obscure and feeble imitators of his mere technique, who were contemporary with him or who came soon after his invasion of the German theatre. Capus has here a little of the peculiar sharp ring of Ibsen. It is impossible to explain how foreign that quality is to the French intelligence. This Ibsen touch is "made over," however. It is not so large and simple and bold as the Norwegian dramatist's. It is softened by the French language and by French talkativeness, for the characters talk a lot, which Ibsen's don't really. Still, the touch is unmistakably there. Nor are Capus's characters such striking individuals as Ibsen's; they lack naive force. And as for structure, Capus in no way approaches the perfection of Ibsen. His dialogue tries to march with the same smoothness, but it cannot. His exposition is intended to be as inevitable and economical, but it is not.

"HELENE ARDOUIN."

The story is a bit dull in the telling. Helene Ardouin is the wife of a bourgeois of Grenoble. She has married unwillingly, and is not interested in her husband, who is a common, rich, piglish sort of good fellow. He is unfaithful to his wife, but she is indifferent to this. His mother lives in the same house, and talks incessantly at her daughter-in-law, who is, on the whole, a very tractable young woman. Helene had in her girlhood loved a young man, Sebastien Reol. There had been talk of their marriage, but this project had been abandoned when Sebastien's father lost his fortune. Now he is leaving Grenoble for Paris to advance his fortunes. He is an exceedingly strong-minded young chap, altogether exceptional in his independence and courage. He visits Helene to bid her goodby, and her old feeling for him revives. M. Ardouin becomes infatuated at this time with some

CRITICS AND PUBLIC.

The critics are puzzled over M. Capus's play. They expected a light moralist to produce a graceful little drama, with a pretty point to it. Few of them are sympathetic to the spirit of the new work, or sensitive to its qualities. All announce its solid merits and its holding power. The public is flocking to it. M. Poincaré attended the first night in that informal and popular way of his, which is at once helping the theatres and making him beloved of the plain people. He has a relish for the theatre, and the managers are already noticing the influence of his taste on officialdom's attendance.

OTHER NEWS.

M. Le Bargy has made "Cyrano" 25 again as well as it ever went when it was new. He suffers not at all by comparison with Coquelin, to judge from public interest and curiosity. The old critics say that he is a bad comedian, a wonderful pathetic actor, and a weaker romantic personality than Coquelin. But he is above all forceful and fresh. In the last act he is an epic spectacle, "like something out of Poe," as Adolphe Brisson says of him. The management of the new Comedie des Champs-Elysees has announced that there will be absolutely no tipping anywhere in this vast new play and music house. Nobody believes that the rule can ever be enforced. Another item of news is that the tax of the "Right of the Poet" on theatre tickets is to be discontinued. Henri Bernstein's new piece, "Le Secret," in which Mme. Simone is appearing, has reminded the Parisians once more of the persistence of this young playwright's superstition about naming his dramas only with words of six letters. It is said that he seriously believes in the charm.



Alice Eiss at Hammersteins



Florence Malone - New leading lady at Harlem Opera House



Taylor Holmes at the Union Square



Mollie Williams at the Columbia



Novita at the 5th Ave.



Sadie Fisher at the Palace



Kitty Gordon at the Colonial