

IN THE DAYS OF THE HIGHWAYMEN.

In the good old times, when travelling was more of an adventure than now, a coach was lumbering heavily between London and Brighton. It had not got half way ere it was stopped by highwaymen.

"Don't mention the word 'boots,' whatever you do," whispered one old passenger to another, a hard featured, spare man; "you see I have £150 in mine."

The highwaymen did their work carelessly, for they wanted to be off again, and relied on threats to accomplish their purpose, without troubling to search thoroughly. When they got to the hard-featured man, he said:—

"Gentlemen, here are a few coins, but that gentleman, you will find, has £150 in his boots!"

When the robbers had gone the aggrieved passenger turned on his betrayer with savage recriminations.

"Steady, sir, steady," was the answer. "Don't grumble about the few pounds in your boots. I have £15,000 in mine. And as you have been of such service to me, I shall be glad to pay you the £150 or even double, if you wish."

A SONNET.

Sad Night, void of her sisterhood of stars,
Ne'er wore a robe of grief so woeful black,
As the funereal solitude that mars
My soul's repose, if love's dear gifts I lack.
The jealous Day frowns on his sister Night,
Who, in sweet dreams, keeps love's fair garlands
green,
With honeyed vows that weave a purer light
Than the sick splendor of the Day's proud sheen:
Perfidious jealousies surcloud the Day.
Yet vanish nightly if thy love be near.
In truant sleep,—whose glories fade away
Or e'er Aurora shed a fragrant tear,—
A foolish tear:—for still thy heart is kind,
Tho' deemed not so,—poor Cupid being blind.

FREDERIC IRVING TAYLOR.

Victoria, B. C.

Musical Jottings

Last week the Grau Opera Company monopolized the boards at the Victoria theatre, and enjoyed excellent patronage. This season they certainly had the good sense to include two new operas in their repertoire, namely, "El Capitan" and "The Isle of Champagne," of both of which good performances were given. From a musical point of view, the performances of the other operas were decidedly poor and ill merited the splendid audiences that subscribed for seats. If an amateur organisation had put on "Pinafore," "The Little Tycoon" and "Cavalleria Rusticana" in the same slipshod manner, they not only would have been laughed off the stage but might have been subjected to the additional insult conveyed by grandiloquent praise in the local press. And, to use a slang phrase, this is no joke, but an unfortunate fact. Take the amateur productions of "Iolanthe," "Robin Hood," the "Geisha," "Bridal Trap" and "Black Mantles," and apart from the superior work of professional comedians, the Grau Company suffers considerably in comparison. However, to give the devil his due, it may be repeated that "El Capitan" and "The Isle of Champagne" were distinctly good. With the exception of Miss Michelena, who possesses a really pleasing voice of sympathetic quality and has dramatic talents of a high order, their principals were very much below par. The tenor at times was responsible for good work, but his voice lacked purity and roundness. When he was not singing, his upper and lower maxillaries were playing battle-dor and shuttle-cock with a small piece of tutti-frutti, which was undignified to say the least of it. Well, after all, the Grau Company only charged 75 cents for the best seats in the house, and if our memory is not at fault, the "Wise Guy" Company charged one dollar for the same privilege, and nearly caused a riot.

The eminent American violinist, Miss Leonora Jackson, has recently commenced her first trans-continental tour, and, from all accounts, is reaping the reward her talents so richly deserve. Miss

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