

Plays & Players

AT THE CITY THEATRES.

AFTER the treats of the last three or four weeks, the theatres afford a very indifferent bill of fare this week to their habitués.

At the Academy, R. A. Barnett's extravaganza, *The Strange Adventures of Jack and the Beanstalk*, supplies an entertainment that is at the very poles from *Hall Came a Christian*, which drew such great audiences to that house last week. Jack and the Beanstalk is a production that whiles away an evening. When one has said that, one has said everything. All the old nursery-rhyme heroes and heroines figure in the plot, which is lightly held together on a string of passable songs and specialties. There are some very fair voices in the company, and some rather pretty faces—as well as many grotesquely and intentionally ugly ones. Miss Edith Yarrington, in the title role, sings and acts with average ability. Miss Margaret Mills, as the Princess Mary ("Mary Quite Contrary"), is a sweet and winsome young lady, but the bright particular star of the company is little Miss Muffet (Miss Cora Leslie), who is a very sprightly and clever little girl indeed. The male roles are, in the main, well filled, while the scenery, costumes, etc., are good.

A clever company in a weak and watery play, sums up the situation at Her Majesty's, where *My Son Ben* is the bill. The play is in no sense a fascinating composition, yet a fairly entertaining production is made of it. With a stronger drama to handle, these actors would make a reputation that is impossible with such a show as *My Son Ben*.

At the Franciscan, Bartley Campbell's *Fairfax*, a drama dealing with the misery wrought by excess in the use of strong drink, is presented in a pleasing manner, and is meeting with popular favor. The vaudeville programme is fully up to the standard.

The last night of French opera at the Monument Nationale, when *Lakmé* was presented, was marred by unseemly delay, the curtain being raised only after 9 o'clock. A squabble over salaries, it is understood, was the cause of the trouble. The season has been a fairly successful one, and many a genuine treat has been provided.

(C.L.O.)

COMING ATTRACTIONS.

FOR HER SAKE, Edwin Gordon Lawrence's romantic story of Russian life, has an atmosphere around it like a draft of pure air over the hills and fields. It is a story of the honest love of a young prince for a serf girl, which, in the land of the Czar, is considered a degradation as great as would be that of the love of a master for his slave. The mother of Prince Valdemar, who is a haughty woman of the old regime, endeavors by all the means at her command, to separate the young lovers, and even prefers to see her son banished to the mines of Siberia, rather than consent to his marriage with the serf girl Olga. Many complications arise from the scheming of the Princess Radetzky, Valdemar's mother, but at last she sees her error and secures the freedom of the young lovers, and finally consents to their union. An amusing vein of comedy runs through the play, relieving and throwing out in bold lines the main story of the drama. This play is to be at the Academy, week of November 13.

MISS ROSE COGHILAN begins an engagement at the Academy, week of November 20. The distinguished actress will then be seen in her fine impersonation of Lady Janet in *The White Heather*, a modern drama, which has had very great success at the Drury Lane Theatre, in London, and at the Academy of Music in New York. In the latter city the play ran for several months to enthusiastic audiences. The management promise a strong supporting company, including the popular actor, John L. Sullivan, and elaborate scenic effects. There are 12 great scenes in the play, the most important showing the London Stock Exchange, Battersea Park, a grand ballroom scene, and a scene at the bottom of the sea. The latter scene shows two divers descending from a boat to a sunken yacht. There they fight a duel with knives in a most

sensational manner. In the ballroom scene, Miss Coghlan and many other members of the company will wear magnificent costumes.

THE STAGE IN GENERAL.

VIOLA ALLEN is enjoying a great boom from the press in her impersonation of *Glory Quayle* in *The Christian*. With due respect to Miss Allen's undoubted talents, there is ground for some suspicion that the boom has been carefully nursed.

Mrs. Fiske's *Becky Sharp* continues to be the theatrical sensation in New York. The Fifth Avenue theatre is crowded nightly, and the press is not yet through talking of the remarkable play. There need be no regrets for financial reasons in the matter of Mrs. Fiske's daring experiment. If the play is very bad Thackeray, it yet has the qualities that enlist popular support, and the indications are that no other play will be given during Mrs. Fiske's New York engagement.

James A. Herne has been highly praised for his artistic staging of the Zangwill play, *Children of the Ghetto*. Mr. Zangwill aided him in producing it, and the results show that they are kindred spirits in matters of dramatic art. It was stated before this piece was presented that Mr. Herne had entirely rewritten it. When called before the curtain at the first night in Washington, Mr. Herne took occasion to deny this story and to state explicitly that the piece had been staged as Mr. Zangwill had originally written it, and that not 100 words had been changed during the entire six weeks of rehearsals. He desired it clearly understood that the play was entirely the work of Mr. Zangwill. As the stage producer he had only endeavored to "harmonize the whole."

Sir Henry Irving is in America again, after a long absence. His coming is the more welcome and significant because there have been many days since he was last here, when it was thought that the American stage, and perhaps the English stage as well, would never see him again. He now comes back with health and vigor for a long season and much travel.

At least two productions that were given their initial performance in this city, at the opening of the season, have scored decided triumphs in New York—*Becky Sharpe* and *The Singing Girl*. Of the latter, *The Tribune* says: "The Alice Nielsen Opera Company appears to be on the high road to success at the Casino, where it is now singing *The Singing Girl*, and will continue to sing it for nobody knows how long. It is a genuine Casino production of the sort that used to stir up the big audiences years ago."

Miss Julia Marlowe is meeting with success in her new role of *Barbara Frietchie*, in a play of that name, by Clyde Fitch. Everyone naturally thinks of Barbara as the heroic old lady who waved the starry banner of the Union in the faces of the confederate troops as they entered Fredericktown, but the play deals with the romantic love of a young woman, and not with a mythical episode in the career of an aged one.

May Irwin's new songs this season, include, "What Did Mary Do," "Not the Way to Treat a Lady," "The Rocking Song," "The Possum Chase," and others with equally taking titles.

Mr. E. H. Sothern and Miss Harned, are playing *The Song of the Sword* at Daly's. Mr. Sothern has a congenial, because spectacular part, and Miss Harned is also well fitted with a role which portrays the romantic love of a titled Italian lady for a young Frenchman who has espoused the republican cause.

The Canadian actress, Miss Julia Arthur, is playing in *More Than Queen*, at the Broadway Theatre, New York.

J. JAMES TISSOT made himself immortal by the marvellous work that is embodied in the collection of pictures now on exhibition at the Windsor Hall. The Saviour is made to live again in these wonderful paintings, and the observer is made to understand completely, and with a touching feeling of love and reverence that defies description, the beauty of the life and work of Christ. The opportunity to see the Tissot pictures is one to be prized, for no city is likely to have the privilege a second time. Montreal will do well to avail itself fully of the chance now given to view this superb collection.

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NEXT WEEK

WHAT IT SPELLED TO HIM.

SHE (at the desk).—Dear, please tell me how to spell costume. I'm writing to mother about my lovely new gown."

HE.—Well are you ready?

SHE.—Yes.

HE.—C-o-s-t, cost—

SHE.—Yes?

HE.—T-u, to—

SHE.—Well?

HE.—M-c, me—thirty dollars in cash.

SHE.—You're a wretch.

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