

AMUSEMENTS.

"The Scouts of the Prairie" at Niblo's.

The long-promised production of "The Scouts of the Prairie" at Niblo's was accomplished last night without accident. A densely crowded house greeted the heroes of the drama, and these were also the genuine heroes of many a feat on the Western prairies a piquancy and interest were given to their appearance sold for a feat upon the appearance of real actors. The drama, of which we understand Ned Buntline is the author, is about everything in general and nothing in particular. Every act ends with a fight between the scouts and the Indians—the first act being still further embellished by a characteristic war-dance. The Indians, as well as the scouts, are the genuine article. The real hero of the piece is, Cale Burg, the part represented by Ned Buntline, the American Bulwer. Mr. Judson (otherwise Buntline) represents the part as badly as it is possible for any human being to represent it and the part is as bad as it was possible to make it. The Hon. William F. Cody, otherwise "Buffalo Bill," and occasionally called by the refined people of the Eastern cities "Bison William," is a good-looking fellow, tall and straight as an arrow, but ridiculous as an actor. Texas Jack, whose real name, we believe, is Omohundro, is not quite so good-looking, not so tall, not so straight and not so ridiculous. Mlle. Moriacci, as Dove Eye, is only an insidious forest maiden, but the worst actor of the lot is Sewarita Carfana, the representative of Hazel Eye; a young white woman who is very tall, very straight and very virtuous. She is worse, even than Ned Buntline, and he is simply maudering imbecility. Her first appearance is ludicrous beyond the power of description, more ludicrous, even, than Ned Buntline's temperance address in the forest. To describe the play and its reception is alike impossible. The applause savored of derision, and the derision of applause. Everything was so wonderfully bad that it was almost good. The whole performance was so far outside of human experience, so wonderful in its daring feebleness that no ordinary intellect is capable of comprehending it—that no ordinary mortal can discuss it at any length with good taste and good temper. Buffalo Bill was called before the curtain at the end of the first act, when he made a speech that was neat and appropriate, as well as short. The entertainment began with a farce by Ned Buntline, called "The Broken Bank," probably the worst ever written, and certainly the worst acted atrocity ever seen on any stage.

Brooklyn Theatre—Mr. Wallack in Rosedale.

The Brooklyn public have, during the whole of last week, been afforded an opportunity of witnessing, at Mrs. Conway's Theatre, Mr. Wallack's admirable presentation of Elliot Gray, in his own charming drama of "Rosedale." Every night, despite bad weather, the house has been crowded in every part and hundreds, ladies included, have been compelled to stand during the entire evening. Many popular plays are from time to time offered to the public and receive cordial greeting, but, perhaps, with the sole exception of Mr. Jefferson's "Rip Van Winkle," no modern play has such a firm hold upon the attention of an audience or so admirably presents the varied passions and emotions absolutely necessary to make a successful drama. Added to this excellence of material there is the personal charm of the author's acting. It would be trite and tiresome to speak of the plot of "Rosedale" at this time, and therefore allusion to the one part seems proper and appropriate. In Elliot Gray we have many evidences of what an actor can himself create for a dramatic portrait, when he (the actor) is himself in the full maturity of his artistic power. From his first appearance we are struck with the resemblance the light-hearted soldier bears to the type in the real world. He wears the dress, speaks and walks as do the men who fill the pages of our own times with history. There is nothing in the whole range of histrionic art so difficult of personation as the "the men of the day," for the very naturalness of look and action which we expect in the portraiture are the more trying when placed behind the glare of the footlights and surrounded by the many artificialities of the stage. None but a thoroughly finished artist can hope for excellence here, since the most trivial detail, unless happily under control, would become of undue prominence and would sadly mar the realism intended. In this particular school of society comedy Mr. Wallack has rivals. There is in his acting everything that is truthful and engaging, with just enough of that coloring of romance which removes it from the fault of common place. We all like to see ourselves as we are, but we do not dislike to see our best points improved, and that is why all who love the drama admire a performance by men of Mr. Wallack's quick and appreciative talent. The difference between a photograph and a portrait by Reynolds, Lawrence, Harlow or Elliott is not greater than the portrait which an actor of mediocre talent draws and the one eliminated by the brain power of a thorough artist. The photograph and portrait may equally present for identification the individual, only the portrait shows the mind of the sitter through the handiwork of the master, directed by his mental power. In Mr. Wallack's drama of "Rosedale," the part he assumes suits, in every particular, his power of rendition, and it is patent to all that the varied characteristics form one perfect whole. In Elliot Gray, Mr. Wallack has been admirably supported, and Mrs. Conway has done all in her power to make the surroundings worthy of the occasion. So great had been the enthusiasm of the patrons of Mrs. Conway's theatre, that a prolonged stay became a necessity, and Mr. Wallack consented. The evening performances will be "Home," "The Captain of the Watch," and "Ours."

Steinway Hall—Rubinstein's Ocean Symphony.

Since Carl Bergmann, in 1857, first introduced the grandest work of the Russian pianist and composer to the New York public, at the Chinese Assembly Rooms, on Broadway, until the visit of Rubinstein and the production of the work under his own direction, with such superb materials as the orchestra of Theodore Thomas, we can only call to mind one performance of it here, by the Philharmonic Society, a few seasons ago. Here is a work by a modern composer which challenges admiration for its fertility of ideas, even if they prove occasionally transplanted ones, intelligibility of purpose and wonderful yet always legitimately used power of instrumentation. This work has been laid on the shelf year after year by our conductors, while the sensational Berlioz, Wagner and Liszt have been thrust forward in spite of all remonstrances. Whatever eccentricities Rubinstein may indulge in he never wanders beyond the limits of true art. What though the reminiscences of elder composers that are scattered through the "Ocean" symphony sometimes approach, and once or twice transgress the bounds of sheer plagiarism, yet the work does not contain one dull or uninteresting bar and there is real vitality in every movement. No one will be willing to take away the claims of entire originality in the "Faust" symphonic works of Berlioz, Wagner or Liszt, but listening to such works makes the hearer wish for a clever plagiarism or adaptation of sublime ideas rather than a senseless, idiotic originality. Where Weber and Beethoven are pressed into service by Rubinstein they do their work faithfully and the adaptor knows how to use them to the best possible advantage.

The ocean symphony is in six movements—*allegro maestoso, adagio, scherzo, andante, allegro con fuoco* and a *finale*. There is no formal introduction in the opening movement. Rubinstein believes with Horace in plunging in *quadros res*. There is nothing of the "Arma, virumque cano" about his first themes. His remarkable power of instrumentation, in which he weds grandeur to beauty, is felt from the first phrase. At the same time there is no departure from established forms beyond the original and constantly varying treatment of charming themes. The instrumentation is very full, and in the basses it conveys a restlessness not inappropriate for an illustration of the ceaseless movement of the billows on the breast of ocean. These figures in the bass communicate a striking grandeur to this movement. Once or twice he indulges in those modern brass discords which offend the ear and which form the leading feature in the works of Liszt and Wagner. An instrumental gap also occurs at the end of the movement, marring the finale. These are the only blemishes in the first part of the work. The second movement is in its multiplicity of themes an *embarras des richesses*. One of these subjects with rich harmonies for the strings, backed by full chords on the reeds and brasses, is inexpressibly beautiful. The scherzo, although it bears that name in the partition, is scarcely a true specimen of that well known movement. The last Allegro is full of nervous power and instinct with *elan* and brilliancy. The finale has many weak points in it, but the magnificent instrumentation of the concluding *chorale*, worthy to be placed beside the immortal "Eine feste Burg ist Unser Gott" redeemed the defects that preceded. Altogether, the "Ocean Symphony" is a grand work, and the principal fault that can be found with it is its exuberance. Six movements, two of which are unnecessarily spun out, are calculated to try the patience of any audience. But there is nothing dull in it—each movement revealing new beauties. We recognized here and there old favorites, such as thoughts from "Oberon" and the "Pastoral Symphony," but they were used with admirable art. Rubinstein conducted with a degree of animation and earnestness which found a ready response from the unrivalled orchestra over which he wielded the baton. The nicety of balance of all the instruments which characterizes this orchestra, the spirit and warmth of feeling with which they enter into the ideas of a composer, and their unanimity in all the nuances of expression and phrasing, gave effect to the work such as to draw admiration from the composer himself.

There were three other orchestral works on the

bill—the "Anacrchon" symphony of Cherubini, one of the best of the Italian composer's; two scenes from "Le Darnation de Faust," by Berlioz, a work more to be admired for its oddities than any positive merit, and the overture to "Der Fliegende Holländer," by Wagner, of which we have spoken before. Mr. Wieniawski played a *chaconne*, by Bach, which served more to give an idea of the gentleman's complete mastery of technique on the violin than to afford pleasure to the hearer. In the second part of the programme he played in his best style the brilliant and effective fantasia in "Faust," which has made his name so famous here. This evening another concert will be given, in which Rubinstein will play a Beethoven concerto and Thomas' orchestra a choice collection of works. It is a pity that so much of the energies of this orchestra should be wasted upon the study of works like those of the school of the future, which are offensive to the ear and conduce to no good. Even Father Haydn is too much neglected nowadays, because he knew nothing about modern tricks in instrumentation, and the crystal-like measures of Mozart are shelved for the same reason. The old masters of the Italian and French schools, who knew more of music than a legion of Wagners, are now seldom heard. Why not a return to the pure fountain and not this constant dabbling in the muddy, troubled waters of modern lunatics? From the charge of universal lunacy we honorably except Rubinstein.

Dr. Hayes' Lectures on the Arctic Regions.

Dr. Isaac J. Hayes, the celebrated Arctic explorer, lectures to-night, at Association Hall, on the open Polar Sea, the Esquimaux and other things pertaining to that region of the world and his adventures. The lecture is the first of a series of three, and will be illustrated by fifty illuminated pictures.

Musical and Dramatic Notes.

Mrs. Emmeline Reed, the Brooklyn soprano, who recently won enviable reputation at Malta as Leonora in "La Favorita," is to appear at the Scala, Milan, in April, in "Mignon."

The Amateur Operatic Club, under the direction of Signor Agramonte, sing acts from "La Favorita," "I Partiani" and "Il Trovatore" at Robinson Hall, in Sixteenth street, to-morrow evening.

The Murray Hill Dramatic Association play "To Oblige Benson" and "The Maid of Croissey" at the Terrace Garden Theatre, on Thursday evening, in aid of the Masonic Hall and Asylum fund.

M. d'Ennery, with M. Chabrilat as his collaborator, is engaged in writing the grand piece for the next winter season at the Theatre des Folles-Dramatiques, to be entitled "La Fiancée du Roi de Garbe."

The first burst of applause at Niblo's last night was in response to a bald and blatant "puff" of a certain breachloading rifle delivered by Buffalo Bill. A better bit of advertising was never before invented.

Mr. Mapleson's new soprano, Mlle. Torriani, who is coming to this country next season with the Strakosch Opera Company, has been brought out at Glasgow, where she performed Lucia, in "Lucia di Lammermoor."

Edmund Kean's grave in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdalene, Richmond, Surrey, is in good condition, and the monumental tablet in the wall of the church has been lately repaired under the direction of Mr. G. Lewis, of Ely place, London, a noted criminal lawyer.