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HAPPENED IN FRONT.

PLAYERS TELL OF FUNNY EXPERIENCES THEY HAVE HAD.

Effect Upon Actors of Interruptions From the Audience—The Man Who Sneezed, May Irwin and "The Widow Jones," Wanted Burr McIntosh to "Soak Him."

Players are affected almost as deeply by happenings in the audience as is the audience by happenings on the stage. Sometimes they are moved to wrath, but more frequently to laughter. Occasionally they are frightened out of their lines.

A man sat in an aisle seat, three rows from the front, at a performance of "El Capitan" the other night. He was a fat man, and he gave a sneeze suddenly—a terrific sneeze. It was followed by another that shook the plumes on the big hats of the women around and made the lights flicker. The audience suspended attention and looked at the sneezer, and the players paused just as he started out a third sneeze that ended in a high note such as seldom had been heard in those parts, though the Metropolitan Opera House is near by. El Capitan stretched out his long arms toward the man, rolled his big eyes heavenward and said in a sepulchral voice:

"Heaven bless you, sir."

This brought the audience back to the stage with a roar, and in a second the performance was running on at high pressure, while the fat man chuckled over the fact that for a brief space he had been the star of the evening. A few minutes later a Sun reporter asked Mr. Hopper how he was affected by the funny things that happen in the audience. After getting a grip on El Capitan's nose and throwing down a cup of hot coffee, as he does between acts, he answered:

"American audiences are not demonstrative, and as a rule things don't happen in front. Of course the man who sneezed tonight couldn't help it, but he made such a blasting success of it that it affected the whole house and therefore the players. If an actor is playing a part where he can say something, it is the best thing to do, for it makes them all laugh and keeps them from noticing a pause."

May Irwin is an actress with whom even metropolitan audiences take liberties. "People have a habit of calling to me from the audience when they want me to sing a special song or to recite something," she said the other evening. "One night a man in the body of the house called out to me to recite 'Hiawatha.' He took me off my feet for a minute. I couldn't remember a line of it, but I called back: 'I will if you'll give me my cue. I've forgotten how it starts.' He gave me the first line, and I shouted it for him."

"When I was playing the Widow Jones one night, during the kissing scene between Rice and myself a man shouted, 'I'd like to be in your place, Mr. Rice. I would.' Rice and I were both convulsed, and the audience roared. When the piece is funny, it often adds to the humorous situation for some one in front to do something unusual."

"I never shall forget an experience I had while playing the Widow in Cincinnati, though of course it isn't art or an actor to see anything that goes on in front or to recognize anybody in the audience, and I never do—I don't think. One night, as I was saying, in the city of cinders and beer, I noticed the queer-

est looking old woman down in front. She looked like a farmer's wife, and she kept peering up at me over her glasses. She didn't laugh once, and in all my life I never saw a human being take a play so seriously. She was with another woman who was equally serious. Finally the old woman jumped up and, peering at me over her glasses and shaking her finger in my face, said, with a rasping, western twang:

"Well, you don't look one bit like her."

"I was flustered, but I managed to gasp:

"Like whom?"

"Like the Widow Jones," she answered.

"Well, I am," said I.

"I don't believe a word you're saying," said she, "for I know'd the Widow Jones and her husband'nigh on to 20 years ago. I stood up with 'em when they was hitched, and you don't look like her. She went off from these parts, and I heard she was a widow and that Jones was dead, and then I heard she was at this the-ater, and I cum to see. You ain't the Widow Jones, and I just want to say one thing more—I don't see how you dare to take other people's names and use 'em."

"With that she flounced out, but the next day when I appeared at a rehearsal she was on hand to give me another blast. I explained to her how it was. She'd never seen a play before and had come 20 miles to see her old friend, the 'Widow Jones. There was a time when such things frightened the life out of me, but I've learned to turn them to good account."

Perhaps there is not another man on the stage so phlegmatic as Burr McIntosh during unusual occurrences in front. He lays his coolness all to the training he got on the football field when he was at Princeton.

"I find more unexpected things happen on the stage than in the audience," said Mr. McIntosh. "However, the first night we opened in 'At Piney Ridge' I got a piece of advice from the front. I said to the villain, 'You left the colonel's baby up there, an you brung yo' own down beah.' And his lines follow: 'You lie.' I instantly make a movement as if to strike him; but, remembering that ladies are present, my arm drops to my side. A man in front was so infuri-

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ated with the heartless villain that he called out to me: 'Soak him, Jack! Hit him a good one for hunk,' and then he hissed like a mad gander."—New York Sun.

A Bible Sled.

A friend of the Listener saw a funny sight down in Maine. At a place there, which needn't be named, there lives a small boy named Jonathan Longfellow, who is a third or fourth cousin of the poet, and he is a great boy too. One day this friend of the Listener was driving past young Jonathan's house and saw the boy engaged at a little distance in sliding down hill on the slippery crust on something that was not a sled. What could it be? Evidently the scrutiny of the passerby was observed by the boy, for he stopped his coasting and called out amiably, "I'm sliding down hill on the Bible." And it was the fact too. He had got the smooth, leather bound family Bible, containing the generations of all the Longfellos, and was coasting on it with magnificent success.—Boston Transcript.

The Humorous Bicycle Repairer.

Reuben Rakestraw—Well, look there! There's a sign that says "Bicycle Asylum." What can that be for?

Roxina Rakestraw—Oh! Why, that must be for folks that have this here bicycle craze that we've been reading about.—Brooklyn Life.

Perturbed Parent—Who has eaten the cake in the pantry?

Undaunted Infant—I did.

P. P.—And what did you do that for?

U. I.—I heard you tell Jane always to keep the cupboard shut. Yesterday she forgot, so I thought I would punish her by eating all the cakes.—Pearson's Weekly.

Thirty-two Times For Peace.

Out of 60 arbitration treaties among the nations of the world since 1815 the United States has borne a part in 32, far more than any other nation.—Boston Globe.

Schoolteaching seems to be the most popular of all the fields that are open to college women. In 1890 there were in the United States 735 women who were professors in colleges and universities.

At one time during the life of John Bright there were no fewer than seven members of his family with seats in the house of commons.

Kaiser and Painter.

There was a touching exchange of compliments the other day between Emperor William and the Russian painter Verestchagin, whose works are now on exhibition in Berlin. The kaiser went to the gallery and was gracious enough to remind the artist that they had met before. "Yes, your majesty," replied Verestchagin, "and then you were only 'highness,' but now you are 'majesty.'" To this the kaiser is said to have replied, holding out his hand, "And you, who were a great painter then, are now a greater one."

It is not altogether surprising that the Russian is reported as expressing deep respect for the emperor's critical powers, or that he quotes, as showing limitless historical knowledge, the emperor's declaration, made at this momentous interview, that "if ever a judgment of God broke over a man, it was over Napoleon at Moscow." Meanwhile Verestchagin's pictures will continue to reveal the horrors of militarism, and thus supply one with the pleasant mental recreation of wondering what Europe's one real war lord can see to admire in them.—New York Times.

Punished.

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NOTICE.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the shareholders of the Charlottetown Gas Light Company will take place at the Gas Works, on Tuesday, the 11th day of May, 1897, at the hour of eleven o'clock in the forenoon, for the purpose of electing directors and the general transaction of business.

LEMUEL McKAY, Secretary.

97—pat

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FRENCH JOURNALS.

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Most of the French journals have a *feuille de depeches*, where bulletins are displayed and a museum of relics of the paper is kept. French journalism is much more personal in regard to its literary composition than that of England or America. A large proportion of the articles are signed with the names of the writers, even when the work is more or less of a routine nature, such as the sporting or law departments of the paper. On the other hand, the ownership of newspapers is less frequently lodged in single hands than is the case in America. Very many of the French papers are owned by companies or associations, while the stock of several of the best known, such as *The Figaro* and *Petit Journal*, is bought and sold daily on the Stock Exchange, the quotations appearing as regularly as those of railway shares or Government bonds.

The circulation of all but a very few of the Paris papers varies enormously, according to the contents. If a paper contains a striking article, well advertised previously, or if its feuilleton, continued story or memoirs, which most of the French journals consider an essential part of their daily issue, is by some well known author, the circulation will run up 50,000 or 100,000 in a week and drop again as soon as the special feature is discontinued. When *Le Jour* began publishing M. Henri Rochefort's memoirs, its circulation went up five-fold, although the price of the paper had been doubled in order to make hay while the sun shone.

The French press is much more concentrated in the capital than that of other European countries. In Germany, for instance, it is not the press of Berlin that has the largest circulation or the greatest influence. In this, as in many other matters, however, the French press only bears out the saying that "Paris is France."—Chautauquan.

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