

AMUSEMENTS.

LONDON GAYETY.

It is about time for the *entrepreneurs* to stop and think. Mr. Abbey's latest importation of London gayety is likely to put a large and respectable portion of this public in a meditative mood. We surely have enough that is inane and vulgar of our own, and there is no excuse for importing more.

The London Gaiety Company that appeared at the Broadway Theatre last evening, occupying, to the manifest satisfaction of a numerous and influential claque, the stage lately adorned by Edwin Booth and Helena Modjeska is not the London Gaiety Company that was here last season. There seems to be a good deal of gayety in London and plenty to spare. As a matter of fact the London Gaiety Theatre must be a very large house, requiring many companies; for it has the London Gaiety company that visited us a year ago and the London Gaiety company that is now visiting us, and there are enough members of the London Gaiety company of the female gender, "original skirt dancers," coughdrop vocalists, and the like, now on view at our variety theatres and music halls to make up several more equally large and attractive companies. The quality and quantity of the gayety they have brought over in ships has been so effectual in dispelling the gloom of this Republic that the only thing now needed to make us thoroughly gay, in the British fashion, is the London fog. To be sure, though, the London Gaiety companies bring with them a heavy fog of their own, which envelopes and incrusts their wit and humor as the dust of ages covers old bottles of wine in the bin.

The nimble and well-trained actress, Nelly Farren, who appeared here last Winter in the silly burlesques of "Monte Cristo" and "Esmeralda," and the genuine comic talent of Mr. Fred Leslie, a man who is vastly superior to his work, gave a certain interest to those performances. There is no Nelly Farren in the new company, and Mr. E. J. Lonnen, who has been brought over to supply Mr. Leslie's place, cannot supply it. For Mr. Lonnen belongs exclusively to London. The gayety he represents is assuredly London gayety. The type he aims to reproduce is the coster, whom we only know of through Mr. W. S. Gilbert's touching allusion to his favorite pastime of jumping on his mother. Mr. Lonnen is capable in his way. He works very energetically to please. He dances well, but not so well as Mr. Leslie; he sings well enough for a comic man in burlesque, but Mr. Leslie sings well enough to deserve a high rank as a singer.

The medium used for the exhibition of these persons last evening (besides Mr. Lonnen there was a host of reasonably good-looking women, many of them graceful dancers, and one, at least a pleasing singer) was a travesty called "Faust Up to Date," which was handsomely set and costumed, so that the pictorial part of the performance was satisfactory of its kind. As a frank display of the lower limbs of young women it was as creditable as such a display can be, which is to say that there has been a large expenditure of British gold for silk tights. The travesty, however, is utterly silly and there is little in the performance to redeem its silliness. Mr. Lonnen's own arduous labors ought to be recognized, of course, but we cannot fairly say that he will amuse intelligent folks, or that the coarseness of much of the stuff he is employed to speak will not offend the refined. The plump lady who took the part of Martha and shook the foundations of the earth and the sky itself when she unintentionally sat down in Margaret's garden, was perhaps quite as successful in amusing the spectators as Lonnen himself.

Miss Grace Pedley, a pretty woman, who took the part of Margaret in place of Miss Florence St. John, spoke the lines of her part in the customary meaningless manner of the British actress in burlesque, sang very nicely indeed, and kept pace with the limelight man, employed to follow her about the stage with his radiant beams, successfully, but apparently with great effort. A dance, executed by four young women, was really beautiful and ingenious, and was the only offering of the night that deserved all the applause it received.

The music by Meyer Lutz is better than the music often used in productions of this sort, and it is not Mr. Abbey's fault that most of it had been already appropriated by less honest entrepreneurs and used in various trivial productions here.

We have indeed no fault to find with Mr. Abbey. The theatrical director who introduced Henry Irving, Sarah Bernhardt, Constant Coquelin, and a dozen other great artists, musical as well as dramatic, to America deserves only our gratitude. If the enterprise under notice does not pay him good dividends it will be his loss, and we will all cheerfully encourage him to bear it manfully. He has imported this latest example of London gayety at great expense, because it suited the London taste. The costermongers, so accurately depicted by Mr. Lonnen, who hissed and reviled our own Mr. Dixey, an artist in his line, went into raptures over "Faust Up to Date." It must be admitted, although it is not conceivable that the cheers which came from remote portions of the Broadway Theatre last night were sincere, that an enormous assemblage of well-dressed people received the burlesque politely. They did not begin to go home until it was much more than half finished, and most of them endured it all. But we are inclined to believe that Americans have had quite enough of London gayety.