

*Keokuk Saturday Post*  
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*Correspondence*

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MISTER EDITORS --

I want to enlighten you a leetle. I've been to the Theater--and I jest want to tell you how they do things down here to Saint Louis--the Mound City, as they call it, owin to its proximity to the Iron mountain and Pilot Knob.

Last night as I was a settin in the parlor of my Dutch boardin house in Fourth Street (I board among the crouters so as to observe human natur in a forren aspeck) one of my hairy friends proposed that we mought as well go down and see Mr. Nealy play Julius Cesar. Now I had see Mr. Belding's Atheneum in Keokuk, and allers had a hankerin to get inside of it--so I told the Dutchman (who is for all the world like other humans, eats like 'em, looks something like 'em, and drinks a good deal more like 'em) that I was anxious to patronize the Drammer.

We hadn't gone more'n about six squares till we come to a tremenjous dirt-colored house, with carriages, and omnibuses, and niggers, and penut boys tearin around in front of it, indiscriminate like, and Dutch (I couldn't put in his name without using up too many of your type) said that was the place. We bought some green tickets and follered some fellers up nigh unto four hundred flights of stairs, and finally got into the concern, which was built into three or four round stories, with men and fiddlers in the first, along with a right smart chance of ragged boys, eatin penuts and cussin like militia majors. The second story had men and gals in it, and above there was nothing but masculine genders. We very naturally went into the second story, and got round where the side of the house (least ways I thought it was part of the house) was painted to represent Alexandria, or Venice, or some other small village settin in the water.

Gee Whillikens! Mister Editors, if you could a been there jest then, you'd a thought that either old Gabriel had blowed his horn, or else there was houses to rent in that locality. I reckon there was nigh onto forty thousand people setting in that theatre--and sich an other fannin, and blowin, and scrapon, and gigglin, I hain't seen since I arrived in the United States. Gals! Bless your soul, there was gals there of every age and sex, from three months up to a hundred years, and every cherubim of 'em had a fan and an opery glass and a-tongue--probably two or three of the latter weepion, from the racket they made. No use to try to estimate the oceans of men and mustaches---the place looked like a shoe brush shop.

Presently, about a thousand fellers commenced hammerin on the benches and hollerin "Music," and then the fiddlers laid themselves out, and went at it like forty millions of wood sawyers at two dollars and a half a cord. When they got through the people hollered and stamped and whistled like they do at a demercratic meeting, when the speaker says something they don't understand. Well, thinks I, now I've got an old coarse comb in my pocket, and I wonder if it wouldn't take them one-hoss fiddlers down a peg and bring down the house, too, if I'd jest give

'em a tech of "Auld Lang Syne" on it. No sooner said than done, and out come the old comb and a piece of paper to put on it. I "hem'd and haw'd" to attract attention, like, and commenced Doo-doo--do-doo--do-doo. "He, he, he," snickered the gals. "Ha, ha, ha," roared the mustaches. "Put him out." "Let him alone." "Go it, old Country." "Say, when did you get down?" and the devil himself couldn't a hearn that comb. I tell you now, I was riled. I threwed the comb at a little man that wasn't sayin nothin and ris right up. "Gentlemen and Ladies," says I, "I want to explain. I'm a peacable stranger from Keokuk, and my name is Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass--" "Go it, Snodgrass." "Oh, what a name." "Say, old Country, whar'd you get that hat?" Darn my skin if I wasn't mad. I jerked off my coat and jumped at the little man and, says I, "You nasty, sneakin degenerate great grandson of a ring tailed monkey, I kin jest lam--" "Hold on there, my friend, jest pick up your coat and follow me," says a military lookin gentleman with a club in his hand, tappin me on the shoulder. He was a police. He took me out and after I explained to him how St. Louis would fizzle out if Keokuk got offended at her, he let me go back, makin me promise not to make any more music durin the evening. So I let 'em holler their darndest when I took my seat, but never let on like I heard 'em.

Pretty soon a little bell rung, and they rolled up the side of the house with Alexandria on it, showin a mighty fine city, with houses, and streets, and sich, but nary a fire plug--all as natural as life. This was Rome. Then a lot of onery lookin fellers come a tearin down one of the streets, hurrayin and swingin their clubs, and said they were going to see Julius Cesar come into town. After this they shoved Rome out of the way, and showed the inside of a splendid palace, they call it, and then some soldiers with bob-tailed tin coats on (high water coats we used to call 'em in Keokuk) come in, then some gals (with high water dresses on) and then some more soldiers, and so on, gals and soldiers and soldiers and gals, till it looked like all the Free Masons and Daughters of Temperance in the world had turned out. Finally Mr. Cesar hissself come in with a crown on, folks called it, but it looked to my unsophisticated vision like a hat without any crown about it. He had a little talk with Antony, durin which he was uncommon severe on a Mr. Cashus (who was a standin within three feet of him, but the derved fool didn't hear a word of it) reflectin on his personal appearance--saying he had a "lean and hungry look," which was mighty mean in him to say, though he was in fact, for the feller couldn't a looked more like a shadder if he'd a boarded all his life at a Keokuk hotel. It's no use expatiating on every thing they done, so I'll jest mention a few of the things which I happened to see when the gal that sot in front of me took her turkey's tail head dress out of the way a minute to say somethin to the owner of an invisable mustash that had got wilted by coming out into the night air.

Arter a spell, a lot of fellers come out, along with Mr. Cashus, and they all laid their heads together like as many lawyers when they are gettin ready to prove that a man's heirs ain't got any right to his property. Presently Mr. Brutus come a marchin in as grand as a elephant in a menagerie of monkeys, and then the people stamped like Jehu. I kinda liked his looks. He 'peared like a man and a gentleman. The gal with the turkey's tail clapped her spy-glass to her eye, and says, "Ther's Brutus--oh, what a mien he has." I didn't like that, so leanin forward, says I, "Madam, beggin your pardon, them other fellers is a consarned sight meaner'n him. There's that Cashus--" "Hold your tongue, sir," yelled the wilted mustasch--and in half a second there was enough double-barrelled opery glasses leveled at me to a blowed me into chunks no bigger'n a mustard seed if they'd only been loaded. Rememberin the music scrape, I dried up and kept quiet, letten the fellers in the lower story holler at me as much as they wanted. Dr. H. had been settin purty close to me, and I thought I'd get him to explain this time, but I found he'd gone out between the acts to see a intimate friend, and hadn't got back yet. Cashus and the other fellers

was for killin Cesar and makin sausage meat of him cause they couldn't be kings and emperors while he was alive, but Brutus didn't like that way of doin the thing--he jist wanted to kill him like a christian, jist for the good of Rome. Then the people stomped again. It 'peared to me kind of curus that they should kick up sich a noise every time any body raved around and ripped out somethin hifalutin, but went half asleep when anybody was tellin about poor Cesar's virtues.

Arter that, Misses Brutus come out when the other fellars was gone, and like Mr. Clennam at the Circumlocution Office, she "wanted to know." But it warn't no use--Brutus warn't going to publish jest then, and it 'pears that wimmin was the only newspapers they had in those days. You see all them fellers was conspirators, got together to conspirit a little again Cesar, and Brutus didn't consider it healthy to tell the secret to everybody. (Mr. Editors, as I'm acquainted with a right smart chance of gals in Keokuk, why, if it's jest as convenient, I'd ruther you wouldn't send your paper only to the men, this week.) At last it come time to remove Mr. Cesar from office, like they say the Buchaneers are going to do the Fremonsters extinguish him entirely,--so all the conspirators got around the throne, and directly Cesar come steppin in, putting on as many airs as if he was mayor of Alexandria. Arter he had sot on the throne awhile they all jumped on him at once like a batch of Irish on a sick nigger. He fell on the floor with a percussion that would a made him feel like he'd been ridin bare back on a Keokuk livery stable horse for a month, if he'd lived. When he drapped, the turkey tailed gal flinched, and grunted a sympathetic "ugh," and everybody in the neighborhood laughed at her. But it wasn't the gal's fault--she had for once got wrapped up in the play, and I spose that was the only part she entirely comprehended, cause I seen her slip down in the street the other day.

Finally, the play was done, and I reached over to the wilted mustache, and says I: "Squire, can you tell me what Mr. Cesar's agoin to play next?" He wheeled hisself around sudden, and says he: "Don Cesar--he be damn'd, sir." "Oh, gracious sakes, don't swear so hard," says I, horrerfied. "I ain't swearin," says he, and he pinte out the play on the bill of fare--"I said Don Cesar de Bazan, sir." I seen through it, then, in a minnit, so I told him it was sufficient--no apologies wasn't necessary.

I changed my seat now, and took a pew in front, so I could see plumb back into the kitchen of the concern, if they should take away the cities and woods and things. Proppin my feet up on the railin, I thought I'd take it comfortable like. Jest then, them fellers in the pit, as they call it (and I guess, Mr. Editors, some of 'em'll get into a dern sight deeper pit than that, afore you git to heaven) went to hollerin "Boots. Boots. Boots." like all natur. Thinks I, that's fun, and I went to hollerin too, though I didn't know what it meant. When I got at it they all pitched in louder'n ever, and that gal like to a shook all her tail feathers out a laughin. Dutch says to me, "Take your feet down, you dern ledderhet, it's you vot makes all dish fuss." Dang my buttons if I wasn't a rarin and chargin when I found they was makin fun of me, and I ris right up, puttin my hat on the extreme side of my head, and stickin my thums in the armholes of my vest, and commenced a little oration, so--"Gentlemen and Ladies--I'm a peacable stranger from Keokuk, and my name is Thomas Jefferson--" "Put him out." "Hurrah for old Keokuk." "Go it, Snodgrass," yelled the purgatory fellers, and in a twinklin a couple of police had sot me down in the street, advisin me to go to the devil and not come back there any more. Now, Mister Editors, Saint Louis may fizzle out and be derved. Yours, with lacerated feelins,

THOMAS JEFFERSON SNODGRASS.