

JEFFERSON SEEN AS RIP

Familiar Old Comedy Amuses
a Big Audience at the
Grand.

Notes of the Coming Plays
at the Local
Theatres.

So long has "Rip Van Winkle" been associated with the name of Jefferson that the old play has practically come to be regarded as the exclusive property of that theatrical family. The familiar combination of name and play served to draw a large audience to the Grand last evening, when Thomas Jefferson began his third engagement in this city. The men and women of the audience laughed and cried with Rip, and Gretchen, and Nick Vedder, and little Meenie and Hendrick, just as their fathers and mothers did before them.

It is hard to realize, in the swift play-transitions of today, that "Rip Van Winkle" delighted American audiences before the present generation of theatre-goers was born. It came to Seattle, then only a village, nearly thirty years ago, and its success was at that time old in the well-settled communities.

"Rip Van Winkle" is almost a one-man-play. It would be meat for Frank Daniels if this sort of comedy were in his line. The best reason that can be ascribed, then, for the long life of the play, is the excellence in which this title-role has always been interpreted by these Jeffersons. Joe Jefferson made the part a household word in America and since his retirement the mantle of Rip has, with seeming propriety, fallen upon the shoulders of his son Thomas.

A Good Comedy.

The younger Jefferson's interpretation is clever, and he may in time come into much of the national reputation in this character, enjoyed by his venerable sire. Thomas Jefferson last night made the play a good comedy. The audience was laughing nearly all the time, though the few real bits of pathos in the lines were not overlooked by Mr. Jefferson.

In this play the supporting company is not nearly so essential as in most plays of the sort. Nevertheless, with a good leading woman this company would be very well balanced. Frances Meek is a very indifferent Gretchen, both in make-up and acting. The little ones are cleverly played by the Bryan children, last seen here in "Shore Acres." Frederick Malcolm does good character work as Derrick. Lauretta Jefferson, the sixth generation of this famous family, plays the grown-up Meenie very nicely.

The play will be seen again tonight and twice tomorrow. It will be followed on Sunday night by Haverly's Minstrels.