

"LA CHEMINEAU" PRESENTED.

French Play Given at Academy of Music by Company from Quebec.

"Le Chemineau," a drama in verse in five acts, by Jean Richepin, French Academician, was given at the Academy of Music, Tuesday night, by Rene Gandrille's company from the Quebec Auditorium and scored a decided success. Lenten exercises prevented many from attending, yet the small audience present was very appreciative and generous in its applause.

"Le Chemineau," a play of genuine heart interest and true reflection of certain phases in peasant life is undoubtedly the strongest attraction presented here so far by French professionals in a decade. Le hemineau is a vagabond who loves the free, untrammelled life of the highways, working when he pleases, travelling on as the whim takes him. As he says, "Each one ought to follow his own nature—to live in prison is not to live, and for me prison is to go no more far away toward the horizon, on the great highway."

The play opens on the farm of Maltre Pierre during the harvest, where Le Chemineau is helping the mowers, and by his songs, to the rhythm of which they swing their scythes, incites them to work much faster. Francois, a middle-aged farm hand, is in love with Toinette, one of the young farm servants, and wants to marry her. But she loves the vagabond, only the call for the road is too strong for the latter, and he goes away free and leaves her. She, though desolate, immediately marries Francois. Twenty years elapse before the next act; Francois, Toinette and her son, Toinet, have been living happily until Francois has a shock. Aline, Pierre's only child, falls in love with Toinet. Master Pierre is furious and threatens to disclose the secret—which he alone has guessed—that Toinet is the vagabond's son. Le Chemineau re-appears suddenly after a long absence, makes Pierre give his daughter to Toinet, and, his duty finished, starts away "sur la grande route."

In the title role Rene Gandrille has great opportunities and of these he makes the most. His part is one which is appealing. Mme. d'Escoubes is a pathetic figure and reaches the climax of fine characterization, when she delivers to the vagabond's son the superb defense of his roving life. S. Girardin, as Thomas, an in-keeper, looks the part, as well as acting it. Roger Bonal, Rene Darcy, A. Duquesne, Paul Coutlee, Suzanne Verneuil and Angele Hyor are also in the cast and the part of everyone is well balanced.