

KENTUCKY BANDITS.

HOW UNREAL THEY ARE COMPARED WITH THE COMIC OPERA KIND.

From the Louisville (Ky.) Commercial, April 6.

"I never was so frightened in my life," said Miss May Fielding, the prima donna of the Carleton Opera Company, yesterday, referring to the collision the company had with the Rowan County bandits at Morehead last Thursday, when Mr. W. T. Carleton, the baritone, came near being shot.

"What did the bandits look like?" inquired a Commercial reporter.

"Well, now, that's the funniest part of the whole business, don't you know," said Miss Fielding, taking a long breath. "They were not bandits. I'm perfectly familiar with bandits. Why, I've seen Mr. Carleton play Fra Diavolo ever so many times and have known at least a dozen men who sang Devilshoof in 'The Bohemian Girl.' Why, I would know a bandit with my eyes shut in the dark. Just before we got to Morehead the train people had been telling us about the Rowan County desperadoes, but we did not expect to see any of them. When the train stopped three g-r-e-a-t t-a-l-l t-h-i-n men came into the coach with long pistols on their shoulders."

"Pistols on their shoulders!" echoed the reporter.

"I presume they were pistols," explained Miss Fielding, with a look of intense surprise and inquiry. "They had triggers and barrels just like pistols."

"Rifles, I guess," explained the reporter.

"They might have been rifles—that's so," said Miss Fielding with a smile of delight. "Perhaps they were rifles. I'm not familiar with anything but these young pistols with which they shoot at three-sheet poster cuts in the target galleries."

"Anyhow," she continued, merrily, "I thought the men were trappers, you know, going out to hunt. So I asked one of them if he found many rabbits."

"Rabbits!" he said, with a frown like a railroad tunnel. "Rabbits, woman!" and he seemed to get madder at every second. "Great God, rabbits don't go; I'm huntin' for men."

"Great goodness," I said, frightened to death, "we can't spare any but one or two chorus singers. You can take your choice, Sir." You see, I was afraid he would change his mind and go to hunting women. I started to go back to my seat, when just then another one of the men leaped to his feet in the aisle, and, pointing his gun toward me, shouted:

"Stop there!"

"Of course I stopped. I never was so scared in my life. I said to the man:

"Oh, I'll stop, Sir; you needn't be afraid of me; I didn't mean anything, Sir."

"I ain't talkin' to you," he said, and then I saw he was looking over my shoulder and I turned and saw Mr. Carleton coming in the door from the smoking car. It seems that Mr. Carleton had a bottle of buttermilk in his hip pocket and was trying to pull it out. I couldn't see what harm there was in a bottle of buttermilk, but Capt. Sam Gaines, of Frankfort, told me that a bottle filled with buttermilk was enough to arouse Rowan County men to a tremendous pitch of desperation. Somehow they regard it as a dead waste of bottle. While the men were occupied with Mr. Carleton I asked one of the brakemen who they were, and he said they were the Rowan County bandits. But I don't believe a word of it. They didn't have any ribbons in their hats and there was not a glimpse of silk tights anywhere. They didn't have even a guitar, and they didn't look like they had been shaved for a month. Why, if Mr. Carleton looked like those men when he sang 'Fra Diavolo' I wouldn't go on with him. After it was all over I went up to one of them and asked him if he was a real bandit and if he could sing 'Fra Diavolo.' He looked at me a moment in the most ungentlemanly manner and growled out:

"No, marm, I ain't no bandit. I'm a wolf from the head waters of Bitter Crick, whar the hunger you go the bitterer the water and the hungrier the wolves. I don't sing; I howl when it's my night."

"I knew at first that they were not bandits," concluded Miss Fielding, with a look of absolute conviction, "because I've seen so many bandits, you know. I don't know what they were. They were not wolves either, and it was easy enough to see the man was lying about that. I don't know what they were, but I'm real glad they let us off."