The Minstrel Show.

The Public Dress Rehearsal of the Minstrel Show was held on Monday afternoon at the Hollis Street Theatre. Taken as a whole, the rehearsal was decidedly successful; but, as was to be expected in a piece never before given a public performance, it did not go with perfect smoothness. The same may be said of the “first night” of more than one of the successful plays brought out this season. As it is, the coaches have been keenly alive to the opportunity offered in the past day or two to make such changes in the programme as suggested themselves at the rehearsal Monday. In view of this, it is unfair to pass judgment in advance on to-morrow’s performance. Our criticism refers entirely to the matinée Monday, and is made now only because the managers of the show made the rehearsal a public performance and charged admission.

On Monday, the fact that the show was a rehearsal, was frequently in unpleasant evidence. Scenes dragged, snap and dash were lacking, the stage management was miserable, and the orchestra had apparently seen the score for the first time. At times, the work of these professional elements was bad enough to demoralize anything. The music itself was much of it new, catchy, and of real merit, and the performance abounded in original features which were exceedingly clever, and, oftentimes, took the audience completely by surprise.

The choruses were throughout good, though there was a slight hesitancy and uncertainty with which the music was attacked. The effect was better from the balconies than from the orchestra, where, doubtless, owing to the acoustic properties of the house, it seemed to lack volume.

The chorus itself was statuesque in its immobility, so that, in general, the audience had but to look at the unmoved front of the chorus for sympathy whenever a joke was “cracked.” The jokes, collectively, verged on inanity. That the management realized this is shown by the fact that an entirely new set of jokes will be introduced to-morrow. Some of the jokes were good, but through mumbled articulation the audience lost the point often of a truly witty sally. So in the chorus, the articulation could be much improved, especially in the “finale.”

The second number of the show was a solo sung by W. P. Davis, ’01, and this was followed by “My Ann Eliza,” sung by H. L. Grant, ’oo, who in turn was followed by M. C. Brush, ’01, with “De Massa ob de Sheep-fol’.” “What I Know,” a topical song rendered by C. van Merrick, was well received, the audience kindly overlooking the fact that Mr. Merrick did not know the words. His presence was so easy, as was that of Lewis Emery, who followed with “Mr. Johnson, Don’t Get Gay,” that deficiencies of the finer touches were easily forgotten.

“The Owl Song,” sung by the following quartette, Harry G. Johnson, ’99, Lewis Emery, ’oo, R. B. Derby, ’01, M. C. Brush, ’01, was a splendid part song, and was well sung, though it did not seem to be correspondingly appreciated by the audience. The “Finale” was entitled “America Always.”

The second part opened with the original Comedy Sketch, in which the vocal work was well done throughout, but the sketch as a whole was disappointing. The first half was much better than the latter half, the lack of sufficient rehearsing being deeply felt as the play progressed.

The drill by the M. I. T. Cadets was under the direction of Elmer M. Hervey, ’02.

The wrestling bout between A. V. Moller, ’oo, and H. Johnson, ’01, was a capital piece of farce acting.

The mandolin solo “Transcription,” by M. W. Hall, ’oo, although finely rendered, was of too serious a character,—not light enough,—to be appreciated by the audience,