

NEWS OF THE THEATERS

ILLUSTRATED NEWS OF THE PLAYERS



While J. P. Morgan in his role of millionaire is making the world gasp, Jerome Sykes, the famous comedian, in *The Billionaire* is making all New York laugh. The clever play is a great success, and Sykes' rendering of John Doe is declared the best thing that artist has done for a long time.



Mme. Blauvelt, who is now giving her last tour through America before going into grand opera at Covent Garden, London, enjoys the distinction of being the only American singer engaged for the grand cycle of musical festivals given this spring through the Dominion of Canada.



Amelia Bingham now appears in a new play by Clyde Fitch. It is called *"The Frisky Mrs. Johnson."* The play is now appearing at the Princess' theatre, New York, and will afterwards tour the country.

NEW YORK, Feb. 7.—The theatre goes in New York is surfeited for the moment with as much genuine amusement as he can utilize. I won't say that this amusement is of the character that will stand hypercriticism, but it is of a kind which suits the average human mind so well that there are few losses to be counted to the expenses at any of our playhouses.

We must charge Charles Frohman with having made one omission to our curriculum of amusement in having postponed the presentation of Stephen Phillips' *"Ulysses"* until the fall, for we all should have liked to see a presentation of this promising dramatist's work during the season.

But Mr. Frohman has given us so many good things that we cannot afford to cast any reflections upon his efforts.

His latest presentation, *"The Unforeseen"* at the Empire is received as one of the best things we have had this season. The plot is too exhaustive for incorporation in a weekly letter, but it covers in an altogether novel manner the foibles of the time which seems to be the purpose of the highest kind of everyday play now presented—sufficient to say there is a new phase of modern life presented in it and originality in plays nowadays, to say the least is a virtue. That is to say the motive, of course, principles and scenes can be more easily presented. We have in *"The Unforeseen"* a fortunate representation of modern life, even to the flippancy of a woman lying, not for childish gain but as a little personal point in life; it is a character study. In fact throughout Robert Marshall's comedy there is not a dull moment to the sensitive, keen intellectual understanding. It is not a bit of a problem play, for those who seek that must go elsewhere for the moment.

Another dainty morsel which we have gotten into town is the *"Bird in the Cage,"* which has succeeded Mabel Gilman's beautiful comic opera *"The Mocking Bird"* at the Bijou. This is a Clyde Fitch production and allows Sandol Milliken to leap from musical comedy into the real thing with Ed. Harrigan, who proves himself to be nothing less than a comic star.

Audrey Boucicault has left the Prin-

cess theatre, where he had followed Weedon Grossmith with an intensely clever play presented under the auspices of the Shubert Bros., and has been succeeded in turn by a clever comedy in which Louis Mann has the starring part. *"The Consul"* was written by Chas. F. Nirdlinger, well known in literary annals as editor of the *Illustrated American* and *Town Topics*, also of a lot of good dramatic reviewing.

"Charlemagne" is a transcript from real life. An official in the state department at Washington told Mr. Nirdlinger of the extraordinary doings of a certain consul at the capital of a minor principality in southern Europe, and little exaggeration was needed for their effective scenic use. Hock conceived the brilliant but dangerous idea of making this principality an American pos-

session, and the violent although ingenious schemes by which he tries to carry out his droll ambition might have given the state department considerable trouble. Hock establishes the American consulate in a cafe, which he conducts under the sign of *"The Spread Eagle Cafe."* There he continually rails at the government to which he is accredited, and parades the delights and advantages of being a "boss" in a republic. The prince and the government find it difficult to proceed against the disorders of the cafe, because if they close it they at the same time, close the American consulate. He becomes popular with the people to whom he gives copious libations, incurs the enmity of the reigning prince, does all sorts of diplomatic absurdities, backed up by the constitution of the United States, which he avers is

used only for curl-papers for the statue of liberty. He introduces as the national anthem of America, *"There's A Hot Time In The Old Town To-Night"* to the citizens, who take more kindly to it than their own, which it eventually supplants. His catch phrase, "It listens like a laugh," savers, when sounded with the deep guttural role of the unctuous Mann humor. The play runs along in this strain through four acts, and when "Hock" finally has the principality of Carinthia in the throes of civil dissension, the order "Removed for the good of the service" comes from the home office, and the American consul has one more feast to Bacchus, and then sails for the land where "All men are created free and equal."

The advent of *"Mr. Blue Beard"* at the Knickerbocker, so long heralded, has simply proved itself the spectacular result of the season and outdoes what the *"Sleeping Beauty and the Beast"* did at the Broadway, where *"The Silver Slipper"* is running into a continuous performance on the same lines.

"The Billionaire," under the same management, continues a striking success at Daly's as does *"Johnny Comes Marching Home"* at the New York, which I understand will finally give way to a negro minstrel show under the same auspices. If this carries as well with the American public as the Moore and Burgess minstrels did in London years ago it will be a treat to all of us and there is little doubt that this able management will give us such a treat.

"Mr. Pickwick," De Wolf Hopper's new musical production at the Herald Square theatre, is in for an indefinite run. The company has been playing *"Mr. Pickwick"* since last August and has met with great success out of town. There is every indication that the coming run will prove the most successful that the elongated comedian has ever enjoyed in New York.

Miss Elizabeth Tyree's winsome impersonation of the capricious, daredevil Dolly Erskine in *"Gretna Green"* has carried this romantic comedy with its pretty story of love and elopements, its picturesque and colonial stage setting and beautiful costumes, to a gratifying popular success at the Madison Square theatre.

Blanche Walsh will appear as the successor to Viola Allen at the Victoria theatre in Wagenhals and Kempers and Oscar Hammerstein's presentation of Tolstol's *"Resurrection."* The wonderful success of the piece in Paris and the demand for its production in almost every country of Europe, has naturally caused unusual interest to be felt among our theatregoers in its appearance in this city, and the fact that the version to be used by Miss Walsh is the same that is now running at the Odeon theatre, Paris, and will be used in Berlin and Vienna, increases that interest.

Miss Julia Marlowe continues to attract large audiences at the Criterion theatre

CONSUMPTIVE THESPIANS TO HAVE NATIONAL HOME



So many cases of consumption are developing in the theatrical profession that leading actors and actresses of the United States are prominently engaged in a movement to found a home for consumptive thespians. The plan is to purchase Miramont castle at Manitou, and turn it into a free sanitarium for actors and actresses. Outside of the individuals active in this worthy movement, every theatrical organization in the country has pledged its support. The promoters hope soon to realize the sum of \$100,000.