

Gossip About Plays, Players and Playhouses

EVER and anon comes the cry that the theater has become merely a matter of commerce, and that Theatricals and Terpsichore are the handmaidens of Mercury and Mammon. Much boasting accompanies the statement that Art is neglected and that the ambitious managers will have none of the avocations that which is sure to crowd their theaters and "turn 'em away." Reasons are ascribed for this and almost unanimously the various commentators agree that it is public taste that is responsible. The people do not desire the purely artistic; they want the crowd, and they are willing to pay for it, therefore the managers serve to them. If this view of the case is correct, the function of the theater which is supposed to be educational it is not to be wondered at. The fact, lamentable though it may be, nevertheless remains that what the "clear public is willing to pay for it will be furnished, but no manager is longer willing to assume any vast or serious risk in trying to determine what it has been. It has been well established that stily society plays, inane musical comedies, and "problem" plays if not too innocuous, will attract multitudes to the theaters of the country, and these are what the men who own and control the theaters of the world are hand-ling forth. It is not surprising that the States that this is true. In England and Europe the success of a play is quickly determined by the number of paying patrons it attracts to the box office. Methods of advertising that would scarcely be tolerated in America are resorted to there that public attention may be attracted to the play and every substitute that will bring an additional penny of revenue is employed. But we are told that in Europe the artistic sense is developed to a point that may never be attained in America.

Henrietta Crossman is the latest to pay the penalty of having faith in the public demand for Art. She had made a success as a comedienne, and in lighter roles was admittedly perfect. From Sans Gene to Rosalind she had conquered all, and her Sweet Kitty Bellairs had made her name be established among the classics of the American stage. But she was ambitious. She had accumulated a large sum of money and was thought to be well established in the world. It was her sole desire to be of some distinct service to the stage, to give to the public some genuine tribute of art. She looked upon her own existence in comedy roles as light and airy things, soon forgotten, no matter how greatly appreciated during the passing moment while the spell was on. To create a character that would be inseparably associated with her name was the aim of her endeavor. So she undertook Christian in Bunton's "The Progress." With the assistance of her husband, Maurice Campbell, whose literary skill and artistic judgment may always be relied upon, and one or two others, she prepared an acting version of the famous allegory and gave it a sumptuous presentation. It was not a hurriedly conceived and hastily executed affair, but a play of preparation for years before being offered to the public. And now Henrietta Crossman has been adjudged a bankrupt. All her life's effort is summed up a failure that has swept away her capital at least. If she retains her ambition it is because she has the fine courage of who makes a judgment of the Cup of Good Fellowship, and let a song ring forth.

Here's to Butler! Do you remember dear old quiet faithful Butler, whose nearest and dearest friend never got any closer in familiar converse than to call him "J. E." Now he is married and living in Seattle as J. Edmond Butler. And a friend tells me that he has taken up singing and is encouraged by his progress. May his shadow never grow less.

Here's to Jules Lumbard! The grand old man whose mighty voice and majestic presence contributed so much to the musical services at Trinity. May he live for ever.

Here's to Howard Wood! The last I heard of him he was in Norfolk, Va., where he was farming (most of the time) and teaching. He was enthusiastic about nature and exuberantly healthy. I should imagine. That was last June. May he always have the money for he will never keep it out of circulation.

Here's to Martin Cahn! and to his most delightful wife. Many a musical event was enriched by the presence of the Cahns when they were here. Mrs. Cahn and her fine voice, and Martin's teaching and playing have not been forgotten. May their children be great.

Here's to Torrence! The fine old head of silver hair and the kind, twinkling, mischievous eyes, they look at me from the first page of the Musical Leader this week.

Mr. T. (as we affectionately called him) is in Chicago and married. His wife is Miss Ladd, who was his secretary when he was here. May his voice turn out well.

Here's to Tabor! Sweet William, whose organ music has made us have inspirations and impulses upward, and has made us think and love of beauty. I saw him in Atlanta, where he was before for some time. The change this time is to be permanent. May he always have a good organ to play and a good price for doing it.

Here's to Grejssman! He is now in Washington, D. C. and I am told that he is meeting with success. I saw his advertisement in the Musical Courier. May his voice never go back on him.

Here's to Lillian Terry! No, we have not forgotten her. She is now Mrs. Starr, and I heard of a pupil of her's last summer. May she always shine.

Here's to Adimann! You all remember the popular president of the late lamented Apollo club. I saw George Holbrook (his former secretary) on the street the other day. Last news of Pennell came from Walla Walla, Wash. May he never lack an engagement.

Here's to Adimann! The little wizard who could coax tones of depth and feeling from his violin. We have not forgotten him. May he be never be poor.

Here's to Albert! Little Hans with the gifts and the gifts, the talent and the temptations. May his soul win out!

Here's to Steckelberg! Down in Lincoln they call him Carl and Mr. Steckelberg and Professor, but here we all know "Steck" and speak of him as such. May his joys increase!

Here's to Joseph Gahn! Over in Berlin you may be sure that the Gahnms are thinking of the Omaha musical colony and their hearts are with us at this opening of the year. Joseph will leave his piano and Miss Gahn will write a poem or two telling us that they will write a long letter later. And they won't. May they always prosper!

Here's to Herbert Butler! How many times he has delighted the audiences at the Boyd theater—now one of the first violinists of Chicago. I saw him at luncheon one day last summer, and he was the same old quiet, serious, studious fellow. May he be happy!

Here's to Mrs. Ford! Who does not remember that wonderful human engine of ability, energy, untiring enthusiasm. Cannot you see her now with her famous hair not developing something about "Women Composers" or "Why Should Not Women Play the Organ?" We often think of her

Musical and Musical Notes

HERE is a toast to the absent ones of the Omaha musical days-gone-by. Let it be drunk in the wine of Memory, out of the Cup of Good Fellowship, and let a song ring forth.

Here's to Butler! Do you remember dear old quiet faithful Butler, whose nearest and dearest friend never got any closer in familiar converse than to call him "J. E." Now he is married and living in Seattle as J. Edmond Butler. And a friend tells me that he has taken up singing and is encouraged by his progress. May his shadow never grow less.

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novelty of the present revival of "Peter Pan" in London was planned by the author for London only, and does not figure in the Adams' revival of the piece at the right hand of the boat, and the affair was made very pleasant by the spirit of the occasion. After the feast a Christmas tree was lighted in Miss Pavey's room, where all members of the company were handed out their presents. After this the company attended 5 o'clock mass at one of the local churches and then to the Christmas matinee. Miss Pavey says the day reminded her of Fourth of July rather than Christmas, because of the attendant fireworks and the condition of the weather.

NEW STORY OF J. M. BARRIE
How He Gave \$2,000 to Help Needy Victims of a Railroad Accident.
LONDON, Dec. 30.—(Special Correspondence.)—"It is true that the Scotch are classed as a nation, then J. M. Barrie is a member of it. Probably he is a close personal friend of the dramatist's and he is ready to take another chance on the piece. Those whose memories still recall the performance given by the company that was at the Boyd on Wednesday and Thursday evenings will not be caught again, even as late as three years from now.

It is easy to understand after seeing the performance, that Mr. Brennan is sincere in saying this is the farewell lover of the Dixon play. "The Classman." Mr. Brennan assures us we will not likely have a chance to see it again until the next time. Probably he thinks he will have forgotten and be ready to take another chance on the piece. Those whose memories still recall the performance given by the company that was at the Boyd on Wednesday and Thursday evenings will not be caught again, even as late as three years from now.

Mrs. Fiske and Madame Nazimova are both in New York, winning scant praise from the critics and even scantier support from the public by presenting one in lieu of the other. Mrs. Fiske offered "Rosmersholm" on Monday night for the first time in New York and failed to secure the success of the drama itself and her failure to bring out the character of Rebecca in its fulness are said to be the main faults of the performance. Madame Nazimova appeared on the same evening in "The Comet," by Owen Johnson, said to be an Ibsenese line. A synopsis of the play suggests that Mr. Johnson has a least familiar with "The Strength of the Weak" for the central thought of the play dominates his, and although it is handled somewhat differently, it produces the same effect. In Mr. Johnson's play it is the unhappy son who commits suicide. Mme. Nazimova is given credit for a finished performance. In the meantime the Russian melodrama, "The Rose of the Ranch," is merrily joggling along to its four hundredth consecutive performance, and the good old musical comedies are still drawing large crowds. Why will the writers whose brains bowle from the weight of brain behind them insist that the dear public is pining for the purely intellectual at the theater? It is a sad confession, and a sorry condition that compels it, that the intellectual is at a discount just now, at least the deeply intellectual. The play that succeeds is the one that doesn't go very far beneath the surface.

Word from Marie Pavey is to the effect that she and the other members of the company were the guests of Manager Rich at a banquet on Christmas eve at Nashville, where the company was playing. Hattie Carmichael had the seat of honor at the right hand of the host, and the affair was made very pleasant by the spirit of the occasion. After the feast a Christmas tree was lighted in Miss Pavey's room, where all members of the company were handed out their presents. After this the company attended 5 o'clock mass at one of the local churches and then to the Christmas matinee. Miss Pavey says the day reminded her of Fourth of July rather than Christmas, because of the attendant fireworks and the condition of the weather.

HOW RUM IS HIDDEN IN MAINE
Ingenuity Used in Concealing Supplies of Liquor in a Prohibition State.
Odd devices that have been adopted to foil the officers of the law by liquor dealers in prohibition Maine were told of the other day by a man who had recently spent some time in the dry state. "I have often wondered what they were most afraid of; letting the officers of the law see the bottles or the bottles being found. There's an especial brand of cops up there to enforce the liquor law. The ladies of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union thought the deputy sheriffs were lapping up booze too hard to attend to business, and they had the legislature supply the state with 'secret' booze police, they call them Sturgis deputies.

From the start the Sturgis deputies have had a hard time. Bad as Maine liquor is, the folks like it. They've been brought up on it and the children cry for it. When they found the officers of the law taking it away and locking up the tont peddlers they started inventing hiding places for liquor.

In a restaurant I patronized in Portland—I went there for food and not to drink—the officers came nosing around quite often, but did not find anything until one day one of them spied a wire hanging from the refrigerator door. He opened the door and pulled the wire.

The door parted, and there inside, where seaweed or charcoal is packed to keep the cold air in the ice box, was a neat row of shelves filled with bottles of whiskey. The shelves had been covered with soft cloth to keep the bottles from rattling.

"They took the ice box door off its hinges and carted it away for evidence. The police cost the boss of the place \$100 and costs.

The temperance folk have organized a civic league up there to see that the cops attend to business. They have their own force of detectives, and every little while the regular cops land on one of these hiding places.

They barked up the wrong tree a little while ago, though, in Machias. There's a great big husky ex-wood chopper there who sells liquor and isn't the least bit afraid of the law. He was one of the cops began to make things unpleasant for him, he rigged up a hiding place in his cellar.

He had a false partition built, standing about twelve inches away from the foundation walls. By stepping on a loose plank under one of the tables in the middle of the room he would release the lock that held a panel. After the panel was unlocked, though, he had to pry it open with a knife.

Between the partition and the wall he had a lot of liquor of all kinds and he didn't want to lose it. One day while one of the amateur cops was around he saw the proprietor limping and the panel and haul out some of the goods. He didn't suspect the fact that the proprietor had pressed his foot on the loose plank first, and full of his discovery, he scooted off to the sheriff's office to tell about it.

The sheriff came back with the sleuth and together they tried to pry open the panel just as the proprietor had done. Falling this, the sheriff sent for an axe and the proprietor sent for his lawyer. Both got in the cellar together.

The lawyer, putting on a stern look, said to the civic league man:

"You know, don't you, that if you cannot find liquor there you'll be responsible for the damage? The moment you break the first board there I'm going to ask the sheriff to arrest you."

The fellow wavered and the lawyer came at him with another suggestion:

"Go get a carpenter who can take down the partition properly and put it in place again."

The sheriff and the civic league cop started, and as they did so the proprietor opened the panel and transferred the liquor to another place. He never used the hide, as they called it in Maine, again.

While a deputy sheriff was searching a house for liquor one day he felt the threshold of a door connecting two rooms give under the pressure of his foot. He found that by inserting a nail or piece of wire a spring holding the threshold in place would be moved. In the recess thus disclosed there were several bottles of whiskey.

"One time in making a raid the officers smashed a heavy door between rooms. The door was replaced and the carpenter when putting it in extended the jam. This extension was left hollow and by means of a panel held in place by a spring it could be opened. Forty quart bottles of whiskey were kept there."

"One time a deputy sheriff in Portland was searching a kitchen bar. While doing so his head struck against a clotheshag. The bag rattled in a funny sort of way and the deputy searched it. He found ten tanks, beside a lot of clothespins.

"You can't beat them. They're bound to have their booze, law or no law."

JAP COOLIES FLOCKING IN
Methods of the Government to Check the Influx Prove Ineffective.

A Washington correspondent of the New York Tribune quotes from a government official the statement that Japanese laborers are pouring into the United States from Mexico by thousands, in spite of the vigilance of immigration officials. Within the last three or four months it is estimated that nearly twenty thousand Japanese laborers have slipped into Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, and although the most strenuous efforts are being made to stop the steady inflow, they continue to pour in.

Secretary Strauss, the Japanese laborers according to the advice received by them pouring into the United States from Mexico are, for the most part, men who have been imported ostensibly to work on the Mexican railways. The Japanese government is supposedly adhering to the agreement made with the United States, and it is not granting passports to any of its subjects of the laboring class that will allow them to go to the mainland of the United States, but apparently passports are issued freely to Mexico. The

laborers shipped to Mexico no more than take up their shovels and picks on the railroad jobs before they drop them, when the contractor's back is turned, and make for the Rio Grande. The United States bureau of immigration has as many inspectors along the border line as the appropriation given by congress would allow, but it is, of course, impossible to guard hundreds of miles of river bank and desert. The Japanese seem to be generally provided with accurate road maps of Texas, and are so intelligently coached as to their movements that when they reach the United States they proceed directly to points where they are cared for by their countrymen. Once inside the boundary they are safe to all intents and purposes, for there is no way of identifying them, as there is the Chinese, and they can map their fingers in the faces of the immigration inspectors.

AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS.

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Lucy Daly AND THE GREATEST SINGING CHORUS
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MISS JANE CORCORAN in "HEDDA GABLER"
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