

Gossip About Plays, Players and Playhouses

GAIN in the west—the real west—suffering because Broadway demands to be amused. Mrs. Pat Campbell, for example, scorned to look upon the dollars that were waiting for her in Omaha and other towns in the west that she might scurry back to New York, and in the wonderful light of the great white way mingle with just as many dollars and at the same time have things just a little bit more like those in dear old England. Mrs. Pat doesn't like America, or America, except the coin of the realm that can be so easily and readily translated into L. S. D. One of the discomforts she has to endure in her traveling about this benighted land is that the hotels are heated by steam, and present one of the charming inconveniences of the hostesses of her own dear benighted native country. She couldn't have the heating apparatus changed at the hotels, but she could do the other thing; she could get back to New York, and there be as chilly as she likes. Omaha people would have liked very much to see Mrs. Pat again, even if it did not seem her, such a much as an actor. She will soon be presented on Broadway in "Electra," and is looking forward to a season of some profit. But she is only one of many. Even Williams & Walker were turned back from a tour of the west to take the place of a production that had fallen down. New York is to be kept going, regardless.

But Omaha hasn't suffered quite as much as might have been born. This season, while all the big things have not come this way, enough of the good have been offered to keep the smile on the managerial face, for the patronage has been uniformly profitable, and the promise for the rest of the season is sufficiently enticing to warrant the conclusion that the public will find itself well enough amused before the base ball season opens.

Within two months Omaha folks will have the opportunity to choose between two stock companies, unless some plans now set on foot before then. The Sullivan & Conditine people will open the Burwood on next Saturday night with a stock company, to be devoted to the production of modern plays at popular prices. No information as to the makeup of the company is yet at hand, but full attention will be given during the week. Mr. Woodward still holds to his announced purpose of installing a stock company, probably headed by Miss Eva Lang, at the Boyd after April 1, to play out the season. It is sure that he will surround Miss Lang with a capable company, including Albert Morrison, and that he will offer attractions that will be of interest. This arrangement will make sure that no one will have occasion to complain of lack of entertainment. Both the Orpheum and the Krug will be running continuously, and Omaha will then present the metropolitan spectacle of having four theaters open each night in the week.

That New York is not altogether without novelty and the basis for new sensation is clear enough. Southern presented "Lord Dunsinore" just as his father did, and made a success of it from the start, winning praise from William Winter, who has heretofore very studiously refrained from praising anything the younger Southern might do. In this instance the stage settings and costumes, not to speak of the archaic methods of the play itself, must have turned the wheels of time backward to the early middle ages, and the actor, in a sudden flush of kilted feeling that has ever manifested toward the son of the man he once praised. Then, "The Waltz Dream" is making the volatile Knickerbocker forget about the "Merry Widow" waltz, and while their hearts still beat in three-four time, he is hunting for a different air. And, in "The Soul Still" as if the name were not enough—Gene, a young Norwegian, brought by way of England, has danced apparently all the gumption out of their heads, and everybody is talking of her, reminding one of a chapter from a fashionable novel of the time of the late Mrs. O. One critic, in the despair of his own enthusiasm, suggests that his readers equip themselves with a dictionary and a book of synonyms and marshal the adjectives of praise and commendation at their leisure. If novelty is what they seek, New York ought to be content for a time at least.

AMERICAN GIRL HEROINE OF PLAY

Comedy by Henry James Tells Story of English Politician and Yankee. LONDON, Jan. 28.—(Special Correspondence.)—Forbes Robertson, who has been out of luck for many months, is going ready to play a trump card. As readers possibly may have heard, a new piece has been written for him by no less a person than Henry James, and today the actor gave me the first details regarding it. The play, which is a modern comedy, will be given for the first time at Edinburgh on March 23, and, if the reception there is favorable, a London production will follow shortly. Later on Robertson hopes to take his new offering across the Atlantic.

To reach the metropolis, however, not to mention the United States, this piece (which is not named yet) will have to prove a much more full-blooded work than James' first dramatic effort, "Guy Devernille." George Alexander, producer of the latter ten years more ago but, like its author's recent literary work, it was far too subtle and analytic to appeal to any save the self-styled "elect" and died an early death. I recalled its fate to Robertson, who declared himself confident that there will be a different story to tell of the American novelist's new play. "No," he said in reply to my query, "this is not an adaptation of any of Mr. James' novels, but an entirely original work, especially written for the stage. It is in three acts, deals with English life and has a vein of romance running throughout the plot. The scenes are laid in a typical old English country house."

"My part," Robertson went on, "is that of an ambitious young politician—what we call a radical—of course, a candidate for Parliamentary honors. As the play unfolds itself he is found in a curiously embarrassing position from which he is extricated by the intervention of a young American girl. She, in fact, is the heroine, and this character, which will be played by my wife, Miss Gertrude Elliott, has been a vein of romance running throughout the plot. The scenes are laid in a typical old English country house."

lowed by W. J. Locke's stage version of his novel, "The Beloved Vagabond," and a play by Max Pemberton called "Kronstadt" and based on his story of the same name. In the latter, which will be produced at the Garrick, one of the chief parts will be taken by the American actress, Mrs. Russ Whytal. Locke's dramatization of the novel which was so popular in the United States was not expected so soon (it is due at His Majesty's within a fortnight), but its production is made necessary by the complete failure of Conyns Carr's "Mystery of Edwin Drood," the final performances of which are announced. Hailed with enthusiasm when produced by Tree in the previous incarnation, this stage version of Dickens' unfinished novel has run less than three weeks at His Majesty's.

The list of other dramatizations of novels, however, is by no means exhausted. Perhaps the most important is that which E. C. Carton, author of "Lion and Lady Alice," has made of J. C. Fair's book, "Lady Barbary," and which will be played by Marie Tempest at the Comedy. There it will replace "Angela," the Anglicized version of "Dix Minutes d'Arret," which has just managed to place fifty performances to its credit and thereby save the faces of all concerned. Meanwhile the London Stage society announces production of a play called "Curid and Commotions," based by Arnold Bennett on his stories of the "Five Towns," and Charles Frohman promises "The Story of the Gadabouts," adapted by Conno Hamilton, while among the other dramatizations which have been made in the near future, it is that which Somerset Maugham has made of his latest novel, "The Explorer."

Under the heading, "Americanizing the British Peasage," the Westminster Gazette, London's leading evening journal, prints the following article: "Is not the above process going on a little too fast?" writes a correspondent. "In Mr. Edwin Milton Royle's 'Squaw Man' Captain (the Hon.) James Wyngate, being next living heir to the earl of Kerhill, must be son of the late earl, or brother, or possibly an uncle or nephew, of the living earl. He could not be the earl's cousin, if he were he could not be the Hon. If the 'Hon. James' were the next heir, but not the cousin, he could not marry the widow of the earl, for she would be either his brother's widow or else his aunt or his niece by marriage."

Royle will have to invest in a "Guide to the Peasage" before he writes another play about titled folk.

Music and Musical Notes

CORRESPONDENT asks this question: After all you have said, is it not because people don't "understand" classic music that they don't appreciate it? I would refer my inquirer to the words of Goethe which were printed in last Sunday's music column of The Bee. Says he: "The effect of good music is not caused by the laws of digestion or the laws of the nerves. On the contrary, it strikes me the more familiar we are with it. It is familiarity, not understanding which makes it 'strike us.'"

MUSIC OF THE BEST AND HIGHEST type is not like a piece of fruit which one bites into, tastes, and thereupon declares it good, or not good. Good music must be heard often, and familiarity with it will make it strike us more. It is not music's fault, but ours, that we do not enjoy it at first hearing.

I do not need to understand botany in order to appreciate and enjoy the most beautiful orchids or the highly developed rose, gems of the art of floriculture. It is not necessary for me to understand architecture to enjoy Cologne cathedral. It is not necessary for me to understand either the laws of digestion or the secrets of the cuisine to dine well with my friends. It is not necessary for me to understand the laws or the science of shipbuilding or navigation in order to enjoy a trip across the ocean. Let familiarity help you to enjoy and leave the understanding until afterwards.

And speaking of familiarity with good music as a means to enjoyment, I have just heard this very thing is to be put to a test in one of our public schools.

I was looking through that wonderful piece of literature (which I think is unfit for the public schools). I mean the verses in Matthew's gospel known as the "Beatitudes," and I thought there surely ought to be one beginning "Blessed are the school teachers," but I found, on looking further down the page, that while there is no verse beginning like that, there are two sentences which I have no doubt apply to those faithful people who try to correct in a few months habits which parents have allowed their children to form for ten, twelve, fifteen, eighteen years; those who teach school are surely meant by it, as the salt of the earth. "Ye are the light of the world."

Well, be this as it may, now comes Franklin school, through its devoted, mountain-moving, indefatigable principal, Miss Hutchins, with an idea, and that is, to have a good school and a good self-acting arrangement for the purpose of letting the children become familiar with the best music, when they begin work each day. The idea is a capital one, and Miss Hutchins will no doubt be able to get many of the musical people who can do things to go out and help her from time to time, thereby adding mechanical means, which of course is an absolute necessity for the regular work. I think I know of about twenty who would go and do things for the children; distinguished amateurs and professionals would be glad to further any such scheme, and I think it would become familiar with the best music instead of the inconsequential, temporary vapors known as "popular" music.

On Thursday, two weeks ago, Mr. Davidson took the time from his busy life as Superintendent of schools, to go out and deliver an address on the "Message of Music" in connection with what was neatly termed "Little Musicale at Franklin school" to which the patrons of the school were invited. The result of that meeting was a resolution to purchase a piano by popular subscription and present it to the school. Half the necessary amount has been subscribed and the rest will soon come. I congratulate the Franklin school and its patrons, and Miss Hutchins.

In the course of a season many books come to this office for review, and some are well worth it. I have two on my desk now (which are merely waiting for careful reading), which I know will be good. But some weeks ago there came to my notice a collection (eight volumes) entitled "The World's Best Music," University society, Inc., New York. A personal letter from Mr. W. K. Fowler of the Fowler Publishing company asked me for a frank opinion of them. Mr. Fowler, who is state superintendent of public instruction, was much interested in public school music, and his name has been in this column before. Such a comprehensive collection I have never before seen. From the oldest of the old things to the very newest of the new all are represented. That is to say, "Silver Threads Among the Gold" and the

Some Short Stage Stories

Giga Netherole gets her New York time in Daly's theater for the coming month and in that raffish, low cherished ambition. When Miss Netherole first ventured from her English houses to this country she was booked under the direction of the late Augustin Daly and was to have played in Daly's theater. Circumstances came up that made it necessary for Miss Netherole to play in Palmer's (now Wallace's) theater, and it was there that she made her American debut. In the intervening years she has always wanted to play in Daly's, as that is recognized by foreigners as the foremost theater in America, or was up to the time of Mr. Daly's death.

In the person of a San Francisco millionaire, whose name has figured conspicuously in the public prints within the last few months, May Yohs has acquired another angle. The Call is responsible for the story. Attracted by the pathetic tale of woe washed up by the press agent, the local millionaire became interested, then curious, and finally would not rest until he met her. "May flew to him with a gurgle of delight and in the prospect of future life years made herself so agreeable that the millionaire was glad to agree to finance another tour for her.

Observes Rose Stahl: "American theaters are bully; they're immense. I've got only one kick on our national art palaces. The builder forgets all about the dressing rooms until the building is finished, then then backs up and walls in the fire escapes."

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English version of "Electra" will produce for her by Arthur Symonds, in the Garden Theater, New York, on February 18. This will be a theatrical incident of much interest and importance. Mr. Symonds' adaptation is from the German of Hofmannsthal and is said to be inspired with the true spirit of Greek tragedy. Mrs. Berthold Tree, well known as a Greek scholar, has been engaged specially to play the part of Clytemnestra. Special costumes and scenery have been imported for the occasion.

Appropos "The Witching Hour," they are telling of a chorus girl in New York who met Sydney Rosenfeld in the lobby of a theater not long ago. "See, ain't it funny?" she chirped. "Here I was thinking of you, Mr. Rosenfeld, and along you come. I always did believe in osteopathy!"

David Warfield was in a confectionery store buying chocolates. Up stepped a huge, bulbous looking man with a diamond on his head and slapped the actor on the back. "Well, Dave, old boy! I am glad to see you. Great Scott! I must be at least twenty-two years since I've set eyes on you," he shouted. "I always used to say that you, Dave, would become a great play. Why, right after night, me and my wife used to go to see you play."

"That was awfully kind of you, old man," laughed Warfield. "But I'm afraid you overestimated the worth of my performances. Twenty-two years ago I was an usher in the Bush street theater."

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Blaney's new sensational spectacular drama entitled "My Tomboy Girl." The play is full of musical features and the story is one of absorbing interest.

Mr. Henry Lee, with his repertory of talking likenesses of great men, past and present, including Pope Leo XII, Captain Dreyfus, General Grant, General Lee, Mark Twain, William Jennings Bryan, President Roosevelt and others, is billed at the top of the roster of new features that start the week at the Orpheum with a matinee today. A notable recruit ushered from the "legitimate" into vaudeville with the gusto that accompanies the acquisition of a new star will be the distinguished and popular high opera prima donna, Helen Bertram, whom General Manager Beck substituted for Arcadia as late as Thursday last. George Snyder and Harry Buckley, the indefatigable musical comedians, have some new stunts to offer in their "Street Musician" and "Mechanical Musical" turns. The Montrose troupe, European athletes, promise a gymnastic turn that is a first-rater. The smiling monologist, Loney Haskell, is down for his best stories. Roatino and Stevens, styled "the singer and the dancer," are a veritable pair of girls. Grotesque fun making, intermixed with gymnastic oddities, and a new series of high-class pictures complete the list of diversions.

For the opening bill at the Burwood theater, when it opens with its permanent stock company next Saturday evening, Stage Director Blacon chooses the fine comedy, "Young Mrs. Winthrop," by Bronson Howard, whose works are among the most prominent successes of his time. Its characters are drawn from high society. The plot is written around the misunderstanding of a young couple. The husband, absorbed in business, neglects his young and beautiful wife, who finds solace in society. They agree to separate, but are finally brought together through the efforts of the family solicitor, who has known both since their childhood. The comedy is furnished by a dashing young society matron with a penchant for divorce, and by a lawyer whose curt, incisive humor is written in Mr. Howard's best style. Scenic Artist Cook and his assistants are preparing two very elaborate sets of scenery for the production and the continuing will be on an elaborate scale. For early production are listed such plays as "Zaza," "Old Heidelberg," "Niobe," and "Cumberland," all having been secured, and others that are new to stock production in Omaha.

Seals for the opening performance and the following week will go on sale Monday morning at 10 o'clock. Matinees will be given on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday.

Gossip from Stagedland. Anne Warner is thinking of arranging for a dramatization of one of her "Susan Clegg" stories for the use of May Robson. "The Resurrection of Aunt Mary" has served its time.

Vesta Victoria has a new song, which is being sung by her old favorites, "Waiting at the Church." It is called "What Did You Marry Me For?" and the gallery almost whistled it the first night she sang it. Mrs. Fiske and Bertha Kalich, the Harrison Grey Plake stars, will next season play their New York engagements in the Belmont theater. Mr. Fiske and Mrs. Bertha Kalich having signed an agreement to that effect. May De Souza, who left "Habs in Toyland" to make a hit in London in "The Girl in the Red Coat," is now playing in a revue at the Moulin Rouge in Paris, and has scored a big hit there as La Belle Americaine.

Dustin Farnum and Walter Hale, who are rivaling her old favorites, "Waiting at the former's tour in "The Ranger," are planning to make an automobile trip of Europe, beginning their tour at Cadix and going as far north as Sweden.

Thomas W. Ross, who is shortly to star in James Fiske's new American comedy, "The Traveling Salesman," has been engaged at the Boston Museum, when Robert Edwards was member of the company. George Edith Wynne Mathison, the English actress who played "Everyman" in this country, is reported to be planning a starting tour of America. She is to star in a new play written by her husband, Mr. Ross, called "The Servant in the House."

Another well known member of the theatrical colony is to be stricken with appendicitis. Helen Bertram, who is touring the former's tour in "The Ranger," are planning to make an automobile trip of Europe, beginning their tour at Cadix and going as far north as Sweden.

Fritz Schaff was out of the cast of "Mlle. Modiste" for several performances in Boston, owing to a mild attack of grip. She is now fully recovered and has resumed her part in the first of the Viennese prima donna is booked for a visit to Cincinnati early in March.

Frank Scott is soon to bring out a new play by Cecil and William de Mille, called "The Trail." This is described as a drama of the Canadian border, the action taking place in a lumber camp. The famous mounted police of the Dominion are pictured in its story.

Katherine Grey is soon to put on a new play by David Graham Phillips, the novel is called "The Wrath of Women." It is a thoroughly modern in theme and the scenes are laid in Indiana. The play is Mr. Phillips' first attempt at dramatic work for the stage.

Contracts have been signed for the Spanish rights of Langdon Mitchell's play, "The New York Idea," in which Mrs. Fiske was seen last season, and in which Ella Jeffries is now appearing in London. It is one of the first American plays to be translated into Spanish.

Charles Wolcott, one of the oldest actors now before the public, has married again. The bride is more than a good half century younger than himself, an exceptionally pretty Canadian girl, who, in the capacity of trained nurse, attended the late Mrs. Charles Wolcott during her last illness.

Frank Wolcott has gone to Colorado Springs, where he will remain for some time and take a good long rest before returning to the east. The attack of pneumonia that nearly resulted in Worthing's death in Detroit last left him in a weakened state, and he was advised to spend the late winter months and the early spring in a more salubrious climate.

Charles Nilson, having retired from the principal character in the performance of "The Three of Us," a change in the makeup of the company presenting that play is now made. Mabel Cameron, who played the leading role in the western production, has been recruited to the eastern company and will follow over the route booked for Miss Nilson. The tour of the other organization will be closed.

An all-star card has been secured by the Aikin-Singer company for the road company which will present the latest La Salle theater success, "The Girl Question," a music play of the same type as last year's success, "The Time, the Place and the Girl." It comes to the Boyd, February 17, 18.

At the Krug theater for four days, starting matinee today, "The Spoilers" will be the attraction. From the scene on board the steamer which is to carry the hero and heroine to Alaska until the final fall of the curtain at the Midas mine the attention is fixed and the interest sustained. The play is a dramatization of Rex Beach's novel of the same name by Rex Beach and James MacArthur and is founded upon the ruthless looting of the gold fields of the Yukon, the dispossessing through so-called processes of law, of the miners who had located their claims throughout the rich mining country. The principal character of the story, Roy Glickster, one of the miners, is a rugged, virile product of the conditions which surround him. The great trouble of the play lies in the struggle between Glickster and MacNamara for possession of the mine. These two are also rivals for the hand and heart of the heroine, Helen Chester, niece of the corrupt Judge Stillman, who is MacNamara's tool. Helen is the innocent cause of much of the trouble that comes to the owners of the mine, inasmuch as she was the bearer of papers to Name which gave to the conspirators the means of seizing the mine. She finally recovers those very papers at a deserted road house, where a thrilling scene takes place, having learned that by their contents the honest miners have been dispossessed.

Lottie Williams, supported by a company of fifty people, will be the attraction at the Krug theater for three days, starting Thursday, February 18, in Charles E.

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