

Ziggy Wins Again

Miss Billie Burke Gets Chance to Enjoy Herself; Marilyn Miller Unhappy as Peter Pan.

By PERCY HAMMOND.
NEW YORK, Nov. 15.—Miss Billie Burke, it seems, is well disposed in the pretty picnic that Miss Clare Kummer and Mr. Zeigfeld are giving her under the name of "Annie Dear." It isn't often that Miss Burke has a good time with her plays, since, like those of many other stars, they usually are being a combination of the feathery humor of Miss Kummer and the heavy spectacle of Mr. Zeigfeld, is apparently a pleasure to everybody. Those who don't care for Miss Kummer's mental silks and satins are gratified by Mr. Zeigfeld's material ones. It should be explained that on to Miss Kummer's delightful old comedy, "Good Gracious Annabelle," Mr. Zeigfeld has grafted a long, large and expensive ballet.

I think the play would be more symmetrical if Miss Burke and Miss Kummer hadn't called in the men folks to help them out. In addition to Mr. Zeigfeld's jeweled pendant, Mr. William Anthony McGuire suspends a slab of burlesque that hangs awkwardly from the structure. In that contribution a scene in a kitchen Miss Burke is forced to smear Mr. Earnest Trux with is when, in a sentimental song, she tries to imitate a goldfish while the chorus boys kneel and stretch out their arms to her.

Miss Burke was never more enchanting than she is as the irresponsible Annabelle who married a heirloom because his whiskers tickled her. She reflects every ray of light of Miss Kummer's beguiling independence as she almost causes us to forget Miss Lota Fisher's delectable performance in the role. When she explains to her guardian that she had bought a house because she felt sorry for it you believe that emotion to be a fact. "I have had many troubles," says she, "but I have always been met at trains"; and as she says it you know that it is true. Only once does she waver, and that is when, in a sentimental song, she tries to imitate a goldfish while the chorus boys kneel and stretch out their arms to her.

I grieved for Miss Marilyn Miller last Friday morning when she opened the newspapers and discovered that she was not so good in "Peter Pan." It had been a triumph for her to be chosen by Mr. Dillingham to play in his renewal of the Barrie classic. After a spectacular career in "Sally" and the Winter Gardens, here was her chance to establish herself as an actress of importance. "I am the happiest girl in the world," she cried in response to the deceptive applause of the fake first-nighters. How tragic it must have been for her to learn from the experts that she had failed.

Of course, it is possible that these experts are wrong. Years of experience are inductive to numbness. Prolonged contact with the theater renders us torpid. As one of those who could not react to Miss Miller's "Peter Pan," I am willing to admit that I may, in the course of 18 years, have acquired some of the attributes of the rhinoceros. Eighteen years ago I bubbled with delight over Mr. Barrie's trundle bed epic. I worded my lye in wordy psalms extolling everything in it from Tinker Bell to Sneeze's sewing machine. Yet last Thursday night I found myself regarding the fragrant ceremonies with all the enthusiasm of a weary war hog.

It seemed to me that Miss Miller's Peter Pan had sprung from Broadway rather than the never-never land. She was young, slim and golden, and she danced with the precision of an accomplished ballerina. Of the nursery and its imaginary exploits and enterprises she gave little indication. She was just a lovely Times Square soubrette mixed up in proceedings concerning which



Edith Clasper AT THE ORPHEUM



May Robson AT THE BRANDELS



Evelyne Ramsey AT THE GAVETY

Billie Jones and Cecile O'Dowd AT THE EMPRESS



Ciccolini AT THE WORLD

Blackface Comedian Is Featured Player in Gayety's New Show

Beaten trails of burlesque have been abandoned in "Take a Look," the Columbia "wheel" show that comes to the Gayety theater this afternoon at 3. Casting about for a new line of comedy to offer, the producer decided that there were new fields of humor that had still to be tapped. Cy Plunkett, the featured comedian, works in blackface and is a master of Ethiopian oddities. Plunkett is seen at his best in the sketch called "The Brave Coward," in which he is found in a haunted house and all kinds of ghosts and "skeery" things from another world pester and bedevil him. Heading the feminine division is Evelyne Ramsey, comedienne and soubrette, also an excellent vocalist and dancer. Plunkett's chief lieutenant in the real of fun is George Schreck, to whom fell the honor of staging the show. Schreck is an acrobatic dancer, a pantomimist of versatility, Charles Harris, Perry and Perry, Salvatore Zito, Flossie De Vere and Helen Mason complete the list of principals. There are 20 sparkling girls in the chorus, 20 scenes of variety and elaborateness, and 20 musical numbers that came from the pen of Clarence Marks and Melvin Franklin. Ladies' 35-cent bargain matinee at 2:15 daily all week, starting tomorrow.

she had but a vague idea. Every time her graceful form was wafted about on Peter's invisible wings you could not help seeing the mechanical wires. When, 18 years ago, Miss Maude Adams soared in and out of the nursery windows I was unaware that her flying was aided by ropes and pulleys. Time, of course, is guilty of one's present frigidity to "Peter Pan." But I think that Miss Miller, too, is a bit culprit. The cast of the present production is inexorably pallid.

At the behest of the French government not long ago Mr. James K. Hackett played "Macbeth" in Paris for one night only. In payment of the great indebtedness our sister republic now sends one of its celebrated actors, M. Firmin Gémier, of the Theater National de l'Odéon, to perform for three weeks in New York city under the auspices of the State department and a large committee of Manhattan Francophiles. The embassy arrived at Al Johnson's theater last Monday night and discharged a part of its obligations by presenting "L'Homme Qui Assassina."

Everybody was present, from Jules Jusserand to Otto Kahn. Anne Morgan was there, Jesse Lynch Williams, Miss Pola Lafollette, Morris Gest, H. C. Chatfield Taylor, Mrs. John Alden Carpenter, Percy Penure, the Albert Gallatin, Alice Duer Miller, the Benjamin Guinnesses and Mr. and Mrs. Brand Whitlock.

M. Gémier proved to be an actor of quiet, eloquent capacity in a melodrama that was only mediocre. Nothing happened either in the play or its performance to bring us and France more closely together. But M. Gémier made an earnest curtain

speech in which he praised us and our hospitality in fervent terms. It was an endearing address, overflowing with sincere compliments, and the gist of seemed to be, "Hackett, we are here!"

Fritz Leiber to Play Shakespeare in Omaha

Fritz Leiber, for years a universal favorite, will visit this city with the largest supporting Shakespearean organization he has ever carried to play an engagement at the Brandels on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, December 1, 2 and 3. This famous young romantic player has won an astounding triumph in recent years with his usual portrayals of Shakespearean roles. Mr. Leiber's method is wholly new and based on ideas of naturalness and beauty. He plays his characters like an actor rather than a servant, his conceptions being free from the rant and bombast seen in many players of the past. Mr. Leiber will be seen here in "Hamlet" on Monday night, "Macbeth" on Tuesday night, "Julius Caesar" Wednesday matinee and "The Three Musketeers" on Wednesday night.

Flotilla Orchestra Tops Bill This Week At Orpheum Theater

Harry A. Yerkes' famous Flotilla orchestra, one of the best known bands of syncopators in New York is the headline attraction at the Orpheum this week. Super-jazz is merely one item of this band's repertoire. Included in its program are arrangements from "Carmen," "Il Trovatore," "Samson and Delilah," the sextet from "Lucia" and several light operas, notably "The Mikado." With the orchestra are two lively negro steppers, late of "Shuffle Along," and "Running Wild."

Julius Tannen, generally known as "The Chatterbox," is back again with his witty observations, new stories, anecdotes and his humorous digest of the world's topics. Mr. Tannen played the Hebrew comedy part of Mr. Perlmutter in "Potash and Perlmutter" and recently appeared with Nora Bayes in the musical skit "Her Family Tree." His gift of gab is appreciated wherever there is an English speaking theater.

Miss Edith Clasper, assisted by Talbot Kenny and Paul Yocan, offers one of the finest terpsichorean productions of the season. Miss Clasper goes in principally for daintiness. Her assistants, however, introduce some truly remarkable eccentric dance steps.

Ruth Budd, known as "The Girl With the Smile" possesses personality to the nth degree. She started her career as an acrobat. Now she is a star of ballet and plays musical instruments in a concert style. Her act is somewhat of a surprise.

Hayden, Dunbar and Hayden will be seen in a medley of comedy, music and dance. Tableaux Petite features 12 art studies of physical loveliness. Something new in the musical line will be presented by the Ash-Goodwin Comedy Four.

Blues Singer Makes First Appearance on Empress Bill Today

The story of a fighting parson, with plenty of comedy, a half-score of song numbers and a background of country girls, is "Clouds and Sunshine," the musical play at the Empress theater this week. Originally a well-known novel, "Clouds and Sunshine" is said to make one of the most appealing of stage plays.

Bert Evans appears in the role of "Rev. Jos Tucker," the pastor of a church in a small rural community. Whitley Holtman plays the part of the pastor's brother, a shiftless, worthless bit of humanity, who believes the world owes him a living. Ed Wilhoit, in the role of an ex-convict, has a powerful role. "Susie Green," the schoolgirl, is the characterization of Helen Burke, and Olga Brooks as the school teacher are the particular objects of enmity among the scandal-mongers of the little town. Rudy Wintner is "Joshua Bumble," president of the school board, who has a hectic love affair with "Samantha Beese," played by Madeline La Courver. Joe Marlon is "Toby Haxton," the chise boy, and it is just the sort of role that gives Marlon plenty of chances to extract fun. The newcomer makes her appearance with the company this week. It is Lillian Bessent, a blues singer and ingenue. Miss Bessent has been playing on the Pacific coast the last four years and is said to be one of the most versatile of comedienne.

May Robson Coming in Play Written by Own Talented Pen

May Robson will appear at the Brandels for a week starting Monday, November 24, with a special matinee on Thanksgiving day. In her latest play "Something Tells Me," a successful and artistic offering, written by Miss Robson and produced by Augustus Pitou.

Miss Robson has a new play every year and has never had one that was not a success, but this season theatergoers will see her in a new style of play which is up-to-date and is overreaching any of her former successes.

"Something Tells Me" is a classic in some ways and a roaring farce in others. No one could imagine Miss Robson in a part which depicted her of her inconspicuous comedy but in "Something Tells Me" she has the opportunity of displaying talents she has never made use of.

In one act Miss Robson gives the sleepwalking scene of Lady Macbeth, which is a treat in itself and only gives her wonderful versatility. "Jane Meredith" (Miss Robson) is a queer combination of self-sacrificing, yet selfish, proud yet humble, firm yet easily swayed; but a psychic demonstration reveals to her the foolishness of wanting everything your own way and everyone can learn a lesson from "Something Tells Me."

Miss Robson has a superior cast to support her and her production is more than adequate.

Burlesque to Return to Laughable Skits

Cy Plunkett, the leading comedian with "Take a Look," at the Gayety theater, believes that there is bound to be a renaissance of the famous old "skits" of the burlesque theater. Some of his earliest recollections of the burlesque theater is of the time when Julie McCrea, Tonia Hanlon and Marie Dressler were the stars," said Plunkett. "I can well remember some of the little bits that were worked up on those days for the delectation of the boys out in front. There was a mixture of pathos, and thrills with just enough humor and drama to balance. One of my earliest recollections of the burlesque theater is of the time when Julie McCrea, Tonia Hanlon and Marie Dressler were the stars," said Plunkett. "I can well remember some of the little bits that were worked up on those days for the delectation of the boys out in front. There was a mixture of pathos, and thrills with just enough humor and drama to balance. 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