

ABOUT PLAYS PLAYERS AND PLAYHOUSES

Give the people what they want and they will surely go to the theater. Omaha has an excellent example of this during the last week, when popular attractions filled all the houses to overflowing at each of the performances.

It is not often that a genuine comedy in real life gets its expression on the stage, but a splendid example of this has been given in Omaha during the last week. On the stage when the Sultan of Bulu came forward everything was smiles and laughter and apparently the happiest combination of well satisfied people ever seen.

Why? The struggling author blames the manager; the manager blames the struggling author. It is not because the English plays are cheaper. On the contrary, the English authors know their value and have placed their contracts accordingly.

Some phases of American life, with its abundance of material for the uses of novelists or dramatists, have been beautifully drawn and exquisitely colored, but they are so few. Owen Wister has done the best a genuine service by giving the east some pictures that the most jealous of western men recognize as accurate and just.

Agitation for a national theater, at which the American drama may be fostered, is again rife in the east, and some names of genuine potency and weight are connected with the discussion. About the first question that suggests itself in this connection is, Have we an American drama worthy of preservation?

Absolute realism is not demanded. It is possible that an ideal may be developed without injustice to real, and in the impressionistic picture enough is present to enable the better, devoid of vital imagination, to yet outline some definite notion of the actual scene. What is required is idealism. A national theater may be of service in fostering the American drama, but many there be who devoutly wish that an American drama be first founded.

Here is how the American dramatists were represented in New York during the week: "The County Chairman," George Ade; "Glad of It," Clyde Fitch; "The Virginian," Owen Wister; "Ransom's Polly," Richard Harding Davis; "Soldiers of Fortune," Richard Harding Davis; "The Other Girl," Augustus H. Thomas; "His Sister's Shame," Dora Davidson; "No Wedding Bells for Her," Theodore Kremer; "The Wayward Son," in which a real locomotive dashes across the stage; our New Minister, well remembered in Omaha; "Way Down East," Little Blair Parker's masterpiece; "Babes in Toyland," an extravaganza. One of these pieces at least deals with Americans in a foreign land, none of them are of any moment, and at least four of them are of the cheap and tawdry melodrama.

Thirty-two pieces running at as many theaters in the great center of American business life, and only twelve of them by American authors, and of the twelve only three dealing with distinctly American

topics. This surely doesn't indicate that there is much of an American drama to be fostered. Not so many years ago the American theater was in a large measure devoted to the plays of the foreigner, and reason for thinking that the purely American in the dramatic field would become a permanent feature of the literature of the country. To what the decadence is due is hardly worth the trouble of debate; it is sufficient that the decadence is noted. In other avenues of literary endeavor we have writers of merit and strength, men and women whose thought is a recognized power in the world. But the giants in the dramatic line we have not. Bartley Crumple is one who filled a large space, and Bronson Howard loomed up big at one time. Campbell is dead, and Howard has been content to enjoy his laurels and royalties these many years. Mark Twain's works afforded some excellent comedies, but they are neglected absolutely, and the same is true to a great extent of the others whose writings for the stage seemed to promise something for a distinctly American drama.

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In the title role, comes to the Boyd on Thursday and Friday evenings for a short engagement. No daintier or prettier musical entertainment was seen in the large cities last season than "Dolly Varden," approved to be, and the fair comedienne's admirers will be glad of this opportunity to see her in this character, since it is announced that she will have a different opera for next year. "Dolly Varden" was written for Miss Glaser by Stanislaus Stange and Julius Edwards, the former having contributed the libretto and the lyrics and the latter the music. It tells a story of a young girl who has been raised in the country and who has come to London for the first time in her life, and most of the humor is created by Miss Glaser herself in the character of the unscrupulous maid. Her comic efforts are not gained by any extravagant makeup, as is so often the case with women who try to be funny on the stage, but through most legitimate and approved methods. It will be remembered that the star is at all times dainty and refined, in fact, the production itself might well be described as an "exquisite piece of bric-a-brac." Among the musical numbers that are most attractive are, "Dainty Dolly," "We Met in Lovers' Lane," "The Cannibal Maid" and "The Lay of the Jay." Her manager, Mr. F. C. Whitney, has provided an entirely new outfit of costumes and scenery for this year, and it is said that he has quite surpassed all his former efforts. In the company are Harry Gifford, Harold Blake, John Dunsmore, W. H. Fitzgerald, Eunice Drake and a large and effective chorus.

"The Minister's Daughters," Leonard Grover's latest comedy drama, will be presented at the Krug this afternoon and the first half of the week. It deals with the life of a young woman, who, when an innocent young country girl and several equally as guileless rural companions in the dive district of New York, and after giving the audience an insight into the Bowery district of the great city, it transfers the story to the country, where the play ends with the usual virtuous triumph. The scenery and mechanical effects are described as the best, and the company has been selected for its fitness to each character.

Lewis Morrison, famous all over the country for the subtlet and finest exposition of satan the modern stage can show, will appear at the Krug next Thursday, Friday and Saturday as Mephisto in "Faust," under the direction of Jules Murry. The production is said to be the most perfect of its kind ever staged of this particular play. No expense was spared and the brilliant display in the garden scene is surpassed only by the startling pyrotechnical display on the Broken. Lewis Morrison's mortgage on fame is based on his masterful conception and brilliant execution of Mephisto, which is one of the most difficult parts in the entire range of modern classic drama, requiring skill, subtlety, declamatory powers and a grim humor and sarcasm, few living actors can command.

For the week, beginning with a matinee today, the new bill at the Orpheum will be the purpose of presenting how frivolous and aimless were the American writers and readers of the later days of the nineteenth century in the United States.

Henrietta Cromman's success at the Belasco is the feature of the New York season. The rumor that Richard Mansfield has quitted and gone with his manager, Lyman Glover, is denied. That one-night stand actor who thought he was heir to the fortune of the late Omaha real estate didn't get much money out of his call to the lawyer, but he has the plot for an excellent modern thriller.

The situation in Chicago isn't clearing up yet. The people engaged in the show business are mean enough to hint that if the Chicago aldermen were properly approached they would change the ordinance might have an easier road. Sidney Rosenfeld will take over the Savoy in New York next week. It is to be devoted to a stock company and plays will not be kept on longer than a month. The highest price to be asked for a seat in the house is \$1.20.

Dustin Farnum, who is playing the name part in "The Virginian," has introduced a new brand of clothes all through the performance. He wears old clothes all through the performance, doesn't change them, but is said to be the finest looking man on the stage today.

Speaking of the American "drammer" Hal Reid has two plays on in New York just now. "The Virginian" and "The Mid-night Marriage." Why should any manager who knows anything about the theater construction as these are at his reach? And the really delightful thing of it is that the New York theatergoers are so precise, says the pictures in "At Cripple Creek" are true to life. Holy bull!

David Belasco, who has his independence of the "syndicate" at last. Dave Warfield closed his show at New Orleans, sending the outside of his show, which involves the Klaw & Erlanger partnership with Belasco, and says he will only proceed under Mr. Belasco's sole management. And Mr. Belasco says he will go back to New York, and he says he will be a newsworthy before he will submit to the dictation of "K. & E."

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

The following dispatch was published in the American papers a short time ago; it may prove interesting to those who have been following the "Parisian" discussion in the newspapers of the east and in the magazines:

BERLIN.—The Berlin Wagner society has published an indignant protest against the production of "Parisian" in New York, deploring the fact that the production is designed to serve for the concentrated Temple of Art, which he created, in throwing away the auditors in the land of dollars, who possess no conception of the true essence of Wagner and probably never will possess any.

It also expresses "most profound indignation" over the "profanation of this most precious jewel of the Wagnerian art," and refers to the "great pain felt here (in Berlin) that German artists have been found who are so lost to shame as to aid in this act of desecration."

When one reads this he scarcely knows whether it was written about Wagner, or about the Omnipotent. Does it refer to a musical work or a religious creed? One reads that dispatch over and over, and asks what does it mean, and what is all about, and then he looks at the heading, sees the word "Berlin," and instantly thinks of the old song: "Doblist verreckt, mein kind, Du mußt nach Berlin."

The amusing excitement of the Berlin Wagner society over the dullness of the American audience cannot be said, especially in view of the fact that we have paid good round prices to hear some of Germany's best known singers in the Wagnerian roles.

Anton Seidl became conductor of the New York Philharmonic society in 1890 and held this post at the time of his death, which occurred very suddenly in March, 1888. Esther Singleton, who translated that very fine work by Albert Lavignac, (Paris), entitled, "Music Dramas of Richard Wagner," says: "Although Seidl's fame will live on in the memory of his admirers, it is only just to the memory of this exceptionally great musician to say that his interpretations of Bach and Beethoven would alone have placed him among the greatest conductors."

Such was our Wagner teacher. Then we have had Mr. Nickish, Mr. Gerike and other great conductors in the east, and our own Theodore Thomas, here in the west, and what shall be said of them? Have they not all been constant in the dissemination of the Wagner idea? And of Walter Damrosch, what shall be said? By lecture and performance he has done a tremendous work in promoting "Wagner stock."

But these people allow us to take our Wagner with us, and we are not supposed to cross our selves every time the name is mentioned, neither do we have to make bare-footed pilgrimages to the Holy City, Bayreuth, in order to admire the true essence of Wagner. We are not to do an annual adoration of the "Lady of Flowers" in Costa, who is on the ragged edge of distressing poverty, don't you know, and "needs the money."

There are those of us who see the "Wagnerian" in the Wagnerian music, who feel that Richard Wagner is given to the world (and not to one little town), a work of art in "Parisian," and we in the land of dollars are and will be loyal to him and to his memory, even if we do think that Berlin Wagner society is somewhat ridiculous.

The singing of Mr. and Mrs. Waterous at the Orpheum last week attracted many students and music lovers, and upon the invitation of some of these accomplished artists kindly lent their voices to the musical department of the Woman's club on Friday morning. Miss Corinne Paulson and Mrs. Sheehy have been alluded to before in this column in terms of high praise, and the attraction they offered last Friday to the large audience assembled there was one more plume to their glory. It is also very gratifying to see the great interest which Madame President, Mrs. Cole, takes in this department. She is always on hand with encouragement and sympathy.

Mrs. Waterous sang a song, "Waiting," by Leo. She also gave several solos, one entitled "Poor Little Lamb," by Carrie Jacobs Bond of Chicago. This song shows the tender soulfulness and clever interpretation of the singer, and Mrs. Waterous has added many friends to her Omaha list. Mrs. Waterous, with his stunning stage presence and his glorious voice, has done much to bring legitimate musical work to the attention of the people who patronize vaudeville almost exclusively. The kind of work done by these people makes for musical education.



OMAHA PROOF

A TRIAL FREE To Omaha Bee Readers.



Ask your German friends to translate that literally for you.

With all due respect to the Berlin people and the Wagner idolatry, as expressed in the above letter, "Parisian" has already become better known, by its association with the word "dollars," than it would have been by constant attachment to Berlin in three generations.

The amusing excitement of the Berlin Wagner society over the dullness of the American audience cannot be said, especially in view of the fact that we have paid good round prices to hear some of Germany's best known singers in the Wagnerian roles.

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Timely Troubles

The aches and pains of the back are timely troubles. You may think them bad enough, but neglect a bad back and the serious side of this timely warning is soon apparent. Early warnings of kidney ills come through the back and are the kidneys' cry for help.

OMAHA PROOF

William Cooper, No. 618 South 17th street, employed at the Waterloo creamery, says: "In February, 1899, I was taken with a severe case of the grip, and it left me with a lame and aching back—especially bad mornings when I could scarcely drag myself about, and it was a hard task to get dressed. My work requires me to stand in wet places at times and this had a tendency to make my back worse. Seeing Doan's Kidney Pills advertised I procured them at Kuhn & Co's drug store. They completely cured me and did it quickly."

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Blatz BEER logo and advertisement text: "The beer with an honest backing—quality. Has no equal in this or any other country."

Advertisement for CORYPHEES HAVE COMPLAINT, mentioning a club and money.

Advertisement for THE SCIENCE AND ART OF SINGING, Special Breathing, Studio-Daivide Blk., 1802 Farnam Street.

Advertisement for Table d'Hote Dinner Today at Calumet Coffee House, 141-15 Douglas St., TOLP HANSEN, Prop.

Advertisement for Boyd's Theater, featuring "The Sultan of Sulu" and "Dolly Varden" with details about the cast and showtimes.

Advertisement for Lulu Glaser, "Dainty Dolly Varden," "The Minister's Daughters" and "The Queen of Singing Comedienne."

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