Gossip of Plays and Players

and carried to such a successful conclusion damentals involved, and requires litan undertaking that might well have the if any stimulus from the stage. The fixelf is so unique, for the play has often and that the educational function of the been given in the open air, but for the stage is exercised for the benefit of those reason that Omaha doesn't offer especial inducements to the promoter of amateur theatricals, and the undertakings, save those that are of an exclusively "society" nature, have met very little encouragement. Miss Fitch refused to allow history to stand as a precedent in this instance, and as satisfactory as if it were the direct operwith the support of the Woman's club and her pupils in the Boyd Theater School of Acting she pushed to a most artistic success the first genuine al fresco performance ever given in the city. It was most thoroughly enjoyed by those who took the trouble to go to Hanscom park on either Thursday or Friday evenings. Some confusion arose as to the time for the performance, owing to the antics of the weather god, but this resulted in a double presentation, and thus a double pleasure, for many who saw it on the first night went again on the second. Artistically, the production was well nigh perfect. The strength of the cast was surprising, the several characters being exceptionally well assumed by the young people, under Miss Fitch's guidance, and the settings being the most beautiful of nature's own work, so that a more pleasing performance of the piece could hardly be imagined. No plan for the future has been formed, but it is to be hoped that the success she has met this time will encourage Miss Fitch to undertake a similar production another

The City Council of Denver has passed an ordinance, which the mayor threatens to veto, establishing a commission whose duty it shall be to pass on the morality of plays before allowing them to be presented at the public theaters. If the newspapers published in Denver are to be taken as a criterion of the moral tone of that city such an ordinance and commission would seem to be entirely superflous, for no play was ever yet offered in an American theater that would fall without the pale of morality thus exemplified. Seriously, though, it seems a little like a serious reflection on public taste that a body of men, whose official tenure is limited, and whose competence may well be questioned, should undertake to prescribe what may or may not be exhibited. Within certainly roughly determined lines there is no doubt but the city council is in a sense the moral conservator of the community for which it is constituted, and its purely legal right to part. allow or prohibit certain exhibitions is equally established. But it has always been a point of pride with the American people that no censorship has been required for the direction or formation of their tastes. Absolutely immoral exhibitions are not permitted, and the general trend of thought has advanced to that point where even unmoral plays are little sought The question of morality is in a large degree determined by the individual each for himself, with due regard for certain fundamentals admitted by all, and any attempt to prescribe hard and fast rules for the determination of individual conduct outside of the generally recognized standard is certain to produce dissatisfaction and resentment, if nothing more.

Plays have been presented in this country, and have had quite a vogue, which cernible. The difficulty has been that some partake more of the nature of a clinic than that are generally set apart for consideration in camera rather than for the open not arise from squeamishness or prudishness, but from that prudence that forbids the presentation of such topics to minds not fitted for their proper digestion and assimilation. Subtle metaphysical propositions are not to be indiscriminately offered for public consideration, for the reason that harm is certain to result from such a course. The immature or undeveloped mentality is not able to follow the author through the ramifications

of recent days in Omaha's theat- diametrically opposed to that intended is would be magnificent to be able to look rical history was the open air attained. The sound and capable mind is to congratulate her at the fall of the curproduction of "As You Like It" able to resolve the question, but such a at Hanscom park. Miss Fitch is mind has already to a greater or be congratulated on having conceived less extent settled at least the fun-Not that the idea fact that the theater is not a kindergarten,

who are equipped to grasp its lessons is advanced in reply to the proposition that some protection is desirable for those minds not properly constituted for the reception of the lesson intended. The result has been attained, and in effect is ation or a censorship, by the natural aversion of the general mass of the people for a play which is wholly psychological in its manifestations. The American people do not want mere "smut" on the stage, nor do they care to hear the deeper problems of life debated by actors. In this way the solution is most practical, and the censorship is decidedly unnecessary,

The further fact that a censor, or a board of censors, would not represent a postive quantity for the determination of public taste is another reason for objecting to the proposition. At best any decision reached would be but the expression of an individual opinion and would not be of greater force than the remarks of the critics, save it might have the support that would come from its being official. That the censor is not infallible has been determined on more than one occasion. In Berlin, for example, the production of Paul Heyse's "Mary of Magdala" was forbidden, while Sudermann's "Magda," "Joys of Living" similar productions are permitted without question. Similar inconsistencies have been noted in London and other places where the censor determines on the permissibility of plays before allowing them to be publicly presented. But the Denver newspapers profess to see behind the local censorship merely a great plan for making the theatrical managers "produce" for the benefit of the board of censors. Maybe so.

Coming Events. For the first half of the coming week at the Boyd, beginning with a matinee today, the bill by the Ferris Stock company will be Oliver Dowd Byron's sensational comedy drams, "The Inside Track." Mr. Dowlan will be seen as "the Black Sheep" and Miss Church will appear as the newsboy Jerry. For the last half of the week, beginning on Thursday evening, Master Clark Marshall will be seen in Joseph Haworth's great military drama, "A Flag of Truce," a play

Some Actor Stories, Players generally may regret that they soon forgotten when they are gone, there are many among them who, achieving prominence, glory for years in tributes of respect which fall to the lot of no other individuals, no matter how exalted

that ran for over 100 nights in New York,

with Master Tommy Russell in the leading

When some years ago Mme. Sarah Bern- about twenty pages too many. hardt scored one of her customary tri-

tain was the Duc d'Amaule, who, upon being invited by the great tragedlenne to be seated, replied: "I am very old, 'tis true, but I can still remain standing in the presence of genius."

Richard Carle's experiences as playwright and directing genius of his own productions have been wide and varied. Hence he has acquired the right to philosophize freely in regard to the teachings of his calling.

"Since I took up the merry sport of play wrighting," he said one day last week, " have been told a great deal about it by players who have never written a play have never been able to figure it out quite to my satisfaction, but I have invariably found that actors and actresses could have done so much better than the playwright if they had had charge of the construction of a piece. They usually make this discovery after the plece is written, and I have frequently wondered why these wiseacres do not take their pen in hand and give expression on paper to the wonderful ideas seething in their brains. They don't begin to seethe, however, until after always after, someone else has completed a piece of stage writing.

There is an old saying in the theatrical world that if a show comes into a town and plays to poor business, the press agent is rotten. If the show plays to a crowded house the show is great. Herewith, I wish to coin another stage truism into a proverb. If the actor makes a hit, he is a great actor. If he makes a failure his part is bad,

"An author may sit up all night, or all of two nights, wrestling with a situation and attempting to think out some original idea that may take the fancy of the play-going public. He may spend the same time on a single line to get a hearty laugh from prospective audiences; yet there are any number of actors, who, after scanning their parts, are ready to point out, with characteristic modesty, any number of things that they are prepared to immediately improve.

"Once I had a comedian working in one of my pieces, who picked up the manuscript of the part I had handed him, weighed it in his hand, as one might weigh a potato, and then remarked: "Do you think I am playing bits?" He had not even glanced at the part. I wondered if he would have cared more for it had I written on heavier paper. I thanked him for his opinion and engaged another man to play at less salary. The player engaged in place of the malcontent made a big hit and added \$50 per week to his salary.

"Another time I saw a fairly well known star pick up the manuscript of his part, skin through the pages with his finger, without reading a line, and then sneeringly remark to the author: 'That's a fine fat part to hand me, isn't It?" "'What's the matter?' asked the play-

"'What's the matter! Why, there are only twenty-two pages in the first act for

"The author, who was not at all fear ful, immediately replied: 'Yes, and that's "When I wrote 'The Maid and the

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Music and

try, and have had quite a vogue, which tours during the coming winter, was one to be remembered with the utmost were better not offered. No public agent instead of one. The object being to give pleasure. One of the features of the evenhas been more persistent in denouncing the medium sized towns within 500 miles ing was the singing by Mr. Jessen of Mr. this sort of play and demanding a higher of Chicago which have not yet orchestras Kelly's settings of "Under the Greenwood standard for the stage than The Bee. Yet of their own, an opportunity to include at no time has this paper seen the neces- symphony concerts in their musical life. Mr. Jessen's voice is a clear, sweet tenor. sity of demanding a censorship for the the- Three visits to Omaha would mean six The only regret was that he had no acater. Such a proposition has always ap- programs, (afternoon and evening perform- companiment (which would of course have peared absurd, and still does. The offensive ances). Beside the general benefit, it would been out of place), and thereby the autype of play has almost totally disappeared mean much to the choral societies, allow- dience lost many beauties of these comfrom the American stage, for the reason ing them a chance to appear with orches- positions. "Under the Greenwood Tree" is a that having once witnessed it the general tral accompaniment. The difficulty is, how- late composition, but "The Lover and His public does not care to see it again and it ever, that Mr. Beach announces that a Lass" Mr. Kelly thought out several years therefore dies a natural and unregretted membership of 300 at \$10 apiece is necessary ago, but has been too busy ever to get it death. The so-called problem play, differ- and this sum must be guaranteed for three ing in degree and intensity, deals with cer- years. It would seem as if \$3,000 a year tain phases of sociological debate and is for orchestral music might be easily raised, excused by its advocates on this ground. but any one who has gotten up a subscrip-Utilitarians have not agreed on the ra- tion list in Omaha knows that it is bitter tionale of this discussion, but they have hard work. Mr. Borglum is even having not yet reached a positive disagreement, difficulty with his Concert Promoter memand superficially some reason for it is dis- bership, though it is a little early to commence canvassing, perhaps. People are of the playwrights have gone beyond the going away for the summer and spending limits suggested by good taste and have al- their money for clothes and railroad fares lowed their presentation of the topic to and small hot rooms near the fashionable breezes. In considering Mr. Beach's plan. a public debate and have paraded details it is also well to remember that Robert Cuscaden has "sweat ink" to try and get a local symphony orchestra started in the discussion provided by the theater. Objec- city. Would Omaha people patronize both? tion to this sort of this sort of thing does. The programs this spring of the Chicago orchestra were certainly a pure delight. It pleasant if 300 musical enthusiasts should quietly rise up and offer their \$10! Alas! the millennium has not come. People pay fabulous prices to clothe their bodies and let their souls go ragged and hungry. Anyway, here is the plan and opportunity, as set forth by the Chicago manager.

"As You Like It," done in the open air of his argument, often involved and in- at Hanscom park Thursday evening, was direct in its approach to the conclusion, most picturesque and attractive. The cast

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R. CHARLES BEACH, manager of was wonderfully good and the whole perthe Chicago Symphony orchestra, formance, with its lovely setting of green has a new plan whereby he will trees and shady nooks, the listeners scattake his organization on three tered in groups over the grassy hillside, on paper. Mrs. Genevieve Clark Wilson inquired again for it during her last visit. She has taken a particular liking to the song and wishes to use it in her recital

> Now comes the question, why do not the millionaires of the country instead of heaping the colleges with more money and makes the following observations:

makes the following observations:

We are behind the countries of Europe from the fact that we have few who foster the arts as on the other side. For instance, Wagner would never have developed into the mighty giant he now is considered had it not been for the patronage of King Ludwig of Bavaria. He encouraged him and stimulated him at the period of his greatest depression. Haydn, the father of symphony, had the same protection. He himself said that had it not been for the protection of Prince Esterhasy most of his great compositions would not have been written. The prince provided him with an orchestra of suitable size for the production of his efforts, supported it and kept it together constantly; indeed, it was part of the prince's household, and Haydn thus had the necessary incentive to write. This is why I say America is still behind the continental countries in respect to caring for art in a general way. Capital is massed more in this country and its influence on art has not been distributed as it eventually will be. In Germany and Austria, parts of Russia and France, theaters are supported either by the municipality or by wealthy art lovers. Some day this will be true of America, for wherever I go I see a healthy awakening. Take my concerts for instance.

Heinrich Conrad is flourishing about Paris with a wide smile and generally prosperous "atmosphere." He is doing his flourishing in a princely new automobile, which his friends have christened "Parsi-MARY LEARNED.

Notes and Personals.

Mr. and Mrs. Kelly were called to Lin-pin last Sunday to sing at a funeral. and ans are selly were called to Lincoln last Sunday to sing at a funeral.

Miss Paulsen closed her studio last week and will spend the time between now and September 1 in Chicago studying.

Mr. Will McCune has returned from a trip to the Pacific coast. Incidentally he visited the Lewis and Clark exposition.

Mary Munchoff will spend her summer vacation in the Alps this year instead of coming to Omaha. Music lovers very much miss her annual recital.

George W. Clark, the American basso, who has had such phenomenal success in London and Paris, will return next season for a tour of his native country.

The marriage of Mr. Oscar Gariessen and Mrs. McCormick is of interest to the local musical world. Many remember the former's singing with pleasure. Mr. Gariessen has now large classes in New York and Washington.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Gahm will go this

Washington.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Gahm will go this summer to Chicago, where Mrs. Gahm will continue her study of the harp with Pramonti of the Thomas orchestra Mr. Gahm will practice and next fall make several appearances in concert. This will be welcome news to Mr. Gahm's friends, who think he hides his light under a hushel.

\$21.35 to Asbury Park, N. J., \$21.35. plays. And return. Via Nickel Plate road. Tickets good via New York City. Dates of a dinner where Mr. Jones told a story about sale, June 29 and 30 and July 1 and 2, with Mr. Tree, extreme return limit of August 31 by depositing ticket. Chicago Ticket offices, Ill friend of his one afternoon on Regent Adams street and Auditorium Annex. Depot, street. The two stood and conversed a La Saile and Van Buren streets, on Ele- little while, and then Mr. Tree said:

Mummy' I engaged a lot of comedians with lately, my boy? very fair reputations. They all fought to interpolate gags and situations of their own devising. After arguing with them for a fortnight I finally went to rehearsal with tothe book of the piece in my hand about ten days before the opening. Then I called them all together and said: 'Here's the you're too poor.'" book, boys. Go as far as you like."

"And maybe they didn't.

When Albert Chevaher and Charles Bertram were in Montreal in 1897 a number of medical students from the McGill college took possession of the gallery and fixed a stage, down which they forwarded tributes of appreciation, comprising baskets of flowers for the women members of the company and walking sticks and boxes of cigars for the Thespians of the sterner sex. The audience at Saratoff, Russia, recently proved that there are other tributes less welcome on the stage, for in the course of a play several political ailusions were made that displeased them, the members of the audience pelted the actors with fans, opera glasses, packets of ammonia, bottles of suldents filled with noxious gases, which broke on the stage and half suffocated the unfortunate artists.

In Philadelphia some years ago there was a local amateur tragedian, a Dr. Landis, building so many dozens of libraries, donate who played for one week each year a round a fund for the furtherance of musical com- of Shakesperean characters. He was never position? The plan has been suggested that accepted seriously, but was regarded as a ten of our best American composers be put huge joke. People flocked to see him, howin a position where they do not have to ever, and the situation became such that worry about their daily bread, so that their for the last couple of years of his appeartime and best energies may be devoted to ance he performed behind a net, as did composing. The argument is based on the James Owen O'Conner, and, before his old idea of patronage and protection. Vic- time, the Count Johannas. The entire prosforward to six of them next year. How tor Herbert in discussing the situation cenium arch was covered with a net similar to that used by trapeze performers in the circus. Each night everybody in attendance was supplied with all kinds of vegetables, which they threw at the net at various stages of the performance, as a mark of their demonstrative enthusiasm.

> Just to prove that all comedians, and particularly monologue comedians, do not exaggerate when they relate at length amusing conversations which turn upon a word misunderstood, Al Wilson offers the following as having occurred within his hearing in a department store: It seems that a gentleman, whose name is Jepson, had just made a purchase which he de-"What is the name?" asked the clerk.

"Jepson," replied the man.

'Chipson?" "No. Jepson." "Jepson?

> "That's it. You have it. Six eighty-two "Your first name; initial, please."

"O. K. Jepson."

"Excuse me, it isn't O. K. You did not undersand me, I said 'Oh.' " "O. Jepson.

The clerk looked annoyed, and then said with some asperity: "Will you please give man & McConnell Drug company.
me your initial again?" "I said K."

"I beg your pardon; you said O. K. Perhaps you had better write it yourself." "I said 'O-" Just now you said K." "Allow me to finish what I started to say. I said 'Oh,' because I did not un-

derstand what you were asking me. I did not mean that it was my initial. My name is Kerby Jepson."

"No, not O, but K. Here, give me the pencil and I will write it down for you myself. There, I guess it is O. K. now."

Recently in London Henry Arthur Jones. playwright, and Peerbohm Tree, actor, at tempted to justify their respective callings and to lay the blame for some modern failures where it by right belonged.

Mr. Jones in this controversy praised modern plays and sneered a little at modern actors, and Mr. Tree praised modern actors and sneered a little at modern An American in London attended recently

"Mr. Tree," said the playwright, "met s

"Have you been down to see me

'No; too poor,' said the other.

" "Too poor!" Mr. Tree exclaimed. 'Why, you spend enough on your wine and cigars "But the other, nettled, interrupted

"'I don't mean I'm too poor. I mean

John McCullough's forcefulness as an actor implanted him so firmly in the public mind that it will be years before his memory is replaced by that of any other player of tragic roles. But of all the thousands who saw him play few were aware that at 16 he could read, but could not write, and that at 18 he knew absolutely nothing of literature, perhaps not even the name of the great poet of Avon, whose interpreter he afterward became. In after life McCullough used to speak

gratefully of an old chairmaker-under whom he worked-for teaching him two things-"chairmaking and Shakespeare." In his periods of conviviality the old chairmaker was accustomed to spout Shakespeare to young McCullough, giving a somephuric acid and vessels brought by stu- ing. It was this that turned McCullough's thought from chairmaking to the stage. Yet in all his after years McCullough was proudest of his early craft. On one occasion, at the height of his popularity, he was the guest of a wealthy Philadelphian. In the midst of the talk after dinner the tragedian glanced at & chair in the room, went over to it, and, turning it bottom up,

> "I thought so! That's one of my chairs. And he seemed prouder of the fact that the chair had lasted so long, because it was so well made, than he was of his histrionic

said to his amazed host:

Gossip from Stageland. May DeSousa is now referred to as "a harming Chicago girl." That's what she ets for making a hit.

gets for making a hit.

Hot weather is given as the reason for the closing of the Hippodrome, the Thompson & Dundy uptown show in New York. The last performance was given last night. Chicago is still reveiling in summer engagements. "The Mayor of Tokio," "It Happened in Nordiand," "The Wogglebug," "Buster Brown," "The Land of Nod," "Little Johnnie Jones" and "Sky Farm" are the headliners. There are others.

Peter McCourt, manager of the Broadway.

the headliners. There are others.

Peter McCourt, manager of the Broadway and Tabor theaters at Denver, has just been ordered by the federal court there to pay to the daughter of his late partner, William Bush, the sum of \$66,090, as her share of profits and for attorney's fees and interest.

Julius Gotlob of the Columbia theater, San Francisco, is pushing his quarrel with the Bulletin of that city to the extent of a suit for damages in the courts. The theaters do not advertise in the Bulletin, but up to date they have not been able to prevent the Bulletin commenting on the plays offered.

The latest is that the Shubert theaters outside of New York will be operated independently of the syndicate, and that dates will be offered Fiske and Belasco. This will let the marooned managers into the best theaters in several large cities. It seems that the solution of the "trust" is appearing in the presence of competition.

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