Gossip About Plays, Players and Playhouses

A SOLEMN hush now pervades the atmosphere that erstwhile has been stirred by the clamor of those who parade their wares at the theater, and were it not for the premonitory splutter of the managers, the firmament would be silent. Those who write for and of the stage are as silent as the summer day before the breaking of the storm. It may be that a storm portends; yet this is hardly probable, for the barometer has held steady at the clear weather point, and only the stillness indicates a possible change. It is more than likely that the quiet hours mean that the writers are taking a long breath for the winter season, when the writings of the one class will again be exposed to the writings of the other, when the author must produce what he has been promising during the last few weeks or months, and set it before the critics that they may turn on it the torrent of their pent-up words. It doesn't really matter a great deal if they be words of praise or blame, they will be turned loose just the same, and the first gush of them will come forth as a mountain torrent after a shower.

Not a great deal that will merit serious criticism is to be offered at the theaters during the coming winter, if the advance notices are to be believed. The well trodden path is not to be greatly departed from. What will probably evoke the storm nearest to cyclonic proportions will very likely be the production of "Monna Vanna," which is set down for an early presentation at the Manhattan under the direction of Harrison Grey Fiske, with Miss Bertha Kalisch in the title role. It is somewhat to the credit of the American profession of acting that this most advanced of the Maeterlinck dramas has not yet been given over here. But it is bound to come, and so it will very likely be better to have it in the hands of some one entirely competent. It has unquestioned dramatic strength; indeed, it would be hard to conceive situations more intensely powerful than those furnished by this play. But it still is a play that would better be left for reading and debate, if it must be discussed, in private. At all events, its presentation is sure to bring about a recrudescence of the unavailing argument as to the man and the woman, and the third party.

Maeterlinck has in this play propounded a question that will very likely never be answered. Briefly Pisa is hopelessly besieged, starvation and pestilence are already laying more than the war; the fall of the town impends, and the sack is certain to bring death and dishonor to many more, for the soldiers of that delightful period had the comforting habit of helping themselves to whatsoever they fancied when turned loose to pillage a conquered community. The commander of the besieging army is a renegade, with apparently original ideas. He sends words to the commander of the beleaguered city that if he will send his wife, clad in a single garment, to the tent of his victorious rival to spend a single night, the town will be relieved. A train of wagons, bearing provisions and supplies needed for the succor of the Pisans, is drawn up in full sight of the famished garrison and citizens, awaiting the word to move. The council of statesmen and soldiers urge on the general to accept the offer, pleading with him in the name of the suffering thousands; his father begs him to consent, and his wife, Vanna, adds her plea to that of the others, imploring her husband to allow her to sacrifice herself that the many may be spared. He refuses. Vanna determines to act without his consent, and goes as required to the tent of the renegade. There she is recognized by him as the woman on whom he has fixed his ideal, the love of his life. This scene is treated with exquisite delicacy by the author, and a strong contrast is set up between the selfish love of the husband and the purer, tenderer passion of the man who had worshiped her more as a name than as an actual existence. Instead of a barbarian, inflamed with the basest of passions, Vanna finds a man of reason, imbued with some fine notions of honor and with high ideas of personal conduct. She returns to the city the next day as the honored guest of the conqueror, and is met with cold reproaches by her husband. When the city has been relieved and the victorious army is withdrawn, the husband throws his rival into a dungeon and declares his doom. Here again is Vanna called on to contrast the loves of the two men, and, bribing the guard, she seeks to liberate the prisoner. That is all. Maeterlinck hasn't answered the question, nor is the conclusion so obvious as to evade a dispute. What a joyful time will be had when Miss Kalisch and her company set this dish before the critics of New York.

Barrie is to be served up later in the season in a double dish, having provided a short drama of the "Little Mary" type and a one-act comedy of the Barrie kind. The Barrymore family is to have the serving of Barrie, Ethel and John appearing in "Alice Sit by the Fire" and Lionel in the certain raiser, which is to be called "Pantaloon." The title chosen for the main piece is one that is likely to raise a multitude of expectant notions in the minds of the audience, but the effect of the play is to be determined yet. Barrie as a playwriter differs somewhat from Barrie the novelist, but only in degree, and one of the greatest difficulties in connection with Barrie has been to know when he is spoofing and when he means it. Americans, who eat pie for breakfast and rarebits for midnight luncheons, couldn't see the joke in "Little Mary," and declined to take it seriously. It may be that this new play, which might suggest Cinderella to some and the Smallweeds to others, will leave us as much in doubt as did his four act disquisition on dyspepsia and rational gastronomy. Nevertheless, it will be grist for the writer's mill. Clyde Fitch, Augustus Thomas, Mrs. Humphrey Ward and Bernard Shaw are also to contribute to the material to which reams of paper and yards of typewriter ribbon will be devoted during the coming winter. It may not be a lively winter for the patrons of the drama, but it looks promising for the critics from this distance.

It would be very nice here to set forth that the critics are sharpening pencils and trimming pens in readiness for the onslaught. But it wouldn't be appropriate. Pencil and pen have vanished before the prosaic typewriter, and only in Paris is to be found the man whose soul is so delicately attuned that he must needs have paper of a pale green hue on which to review a tragedy, of yellow for a comedy and scarlet for melodrama, with suitable inks. It's the regulation "copy" paper furnished by the office, cut to a size that is convenient for the typesetting machine, and a typewriter, also furnished by the office, for the critic of the present. He does his little level best to keep up with the procession, and would be clear out of the picture if he undertook to write his stuff by any of the archaic methods still popular in fiction. Moreover, the critic today is expected to handle them hot off the hat, and isn't permitted to waste much time in groping around searching for the exact word to express his feelings. If he can't think of "hantle" when he wants to, he must slap down "mickle" and let it go at that, trusting to his reader's intelligence or haste to exonerate him from the palpable error in quantity. And, if the edition would wait, and the mails could be held until the critic had thought out the precise degree of approbation or reprobation desirable to be bestowed on the particular performance in question, he has still another incentive to the use of the typewriter. Its letters are made plainly, and if he be so fortunate as to write "hantle," he is not ordinarily exposed to the danger of seeing it appear in print "mickle." But such solecisms do occur—and when they do that isn't the word the critic uses in referring to the occurrence. He never gets quite accustomed to it, for the conscience of even a hardened and experienced critic does not become entirely calloused, and he usually retains a little pride in its own facility for expressing his views. Therefore when the Merganthaler takes it into its iron head to substitute white for black, or something equally annoying, the critic feels a pang that would delight some of those who long to see him suffer. By the time he gets around to meet the man who is supposed to have some influence over the Mergenthaler, he has concluded that it is too late to catch those who have already read the paper, and maybe he had better say nothing about it. Philosophy is a great thing, even for a critic. It buoys him up through many a dull performance, enables him to say many a kind word when he feels more like saying a sharp one, and eliminates many a caustic remark from a review. And so he has his little typewriter all nicely oiled and adjusted, with a fresh ribbon, and is only waiting for the man in "one" to push the button and notify the man in the fly gallery to "hist the rag."

Just a week remains in Omaha before the beginning of the "winter" season. The Krug starts next Sunday night, which is about as early as could reasonably be looked for. Two weeks from Monday May Irwin will be at the Boyd, but her appearance there is not intended to signalize the opening of the season. She will be merely a breather. On Sunday, September 3, Miss Ethel Barrymore will begin the regular season at the Boyd, presenting for three performances, "Sunday," the play in which she made so much talk in New York and London last season after laying aside "Cousin Kate." Miss Barrymore will make a short tour of the west, and then return to New York, about November 1, to present the Barrie play. The date for opening the Orpheum has not yet been definitely fixed, but is tentatively set at either the first or second Sunday in September. The Burwood will be opened as soon as possible, but its state of incompletion prevents fixing the date for a certainty.

Sarah Bernhardt.

In a long trailing robe of cream white, relieved only by a bunch of pale pink carnations, Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, ever youthful, sat against the purple velvet of a sofa. Not a jewel marred the color harmony of the exquisitely restful tableau.

In one of the sumptuous salons of her hotel the great actress received me and graciously answered my importunate questions, in spite of the fact that a long and fatiguing journey had immediately preceded our interview. Who would ever guess from the fresh evellfee physiognomy of the great artiste that she had just returned from a busy tour in Swansea, Bristol and other provincial towns? And she is hurrying off this very evening to rehearsal! Yet all this, she tells me with a smile, is nothing to what she can accomplish in one day!

Fearing to let the precious moments slip without hearing all I had come to learn, I began to pour forth a volley of questions, my first, of course, dealing with "Angelo," Victor Hugo's dramatic masterpiece of sculptural prose, as Theophile Gautier calls it. "I am appearing," replied Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, "for the first time in London as La Tisbe, a part, as you know, which has been impersonated by three celebrated actresses—Mme. Dorval, Mlle. Mars and Mlle. Rachel. For many years I longed to interpret the role of the passionate courtesan of medieval Padua, 'the outcast of society,' to use Victor Hugo's own words, the rival in love and beauty of the noble dame, Catarina Malapieri, who, like Caesar's consort, is above suspicion. In 1872—I was then rehearsing 'Ruy Blas' at the Odeon theater—I went to pay a visit to Victor Hugo to express my wish of interpreting the part of La Tisbe. The poet, I remember, was then standing and sketching at his desk one of those fantastic landscapes he was wont to execute with either ink or charcoal, or even soot. He laughed so loudly and so heartily at my suggestion that he sank exhausted in his armchair.

"'My dear child,' he gasped, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered breath, 'before attempting to play La Tisbe you must acquire greater physical strength and artistic experience. It would take you years and years! * * *'

"And you see," added Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, "it took me just thirty-three years to have my wish fulfilled, for, as you know, it was only, last February that I staged 'Angelo' for the first time at my theater in Paris.

"Following on the production of Victor Hugo's prose drama, I propose to appear again during the present season in Victorien Sardou's 'La Sorciere.' It has been hinted that a passion for the mysterious and the occult, in fact, for what was once called the Black Art, prompted me to incarnate on the stage the character of Zoraya, the sorceress. This is, of course, another of the many wild legends about me given to the world by that unknown, irrepressible mystificateur—the 'person who knows.' At one time, it is true, I took great interest in spiritualism, and even acted as Simone d'Aubenas in Victorien Sardou's 'Spiritisme,' the part of a woman resuscitated from the dead. Our veteran dramatist believes still, I think, in the influence of what he calls 'the mysterious and uncontrollable Power,' but as regards myself, I have, for a long time, lost all faith in spiritualism and other kindred subjects." * * *

Of the forthcoming performance in London of "Adrienne Lecouvreur," Mme. Sarah Bernhardt spoke with enthusiasm, both as an actress looking forward to a new creation and as an author anticipating the production of a new work. For the play, which is to be staged next week at the Coronet theater, is not, as Omaha Bee readers know, the well known piece by Scribe and Legouve, but an original work written entirely by Mme. Sarah Bernhardt.

Not content with being a great actress, a painter, a sculptor, an art critic, a novelist and even an aeronaut, Mme. Bernhardt has also written for the stage. After producing her first play, "L'Aveu," some years ago, she will now make her second bow to the public as a dramatist in "Adrienne Lecouvreur."

The author explained to me that she had woven a plot round the story of the Duchess de Bouillon and Adrienne Lecouvreur. Her stage version differs from that of Scribe and Legouve's in that it comprises six acts instead of five, and introduces new scenes in the Bastile and the Luxembourg Gardens, and new parts, as those of Voltaire, Count d'Argenthal, Du Marsay, la Balicourt and the hunchback Abbe Bourret—a very effective role, entrusted to M. de Max.

"To what," I hazarded, "do we owe the fact of such a sensational premiere taking place in London?"

"Ah! You will scarce believe when I tell you," replied Mme. Bernhardt, with flashing eyes, and reaching out her arms in an inimitable gesture of despair; "the Societe des Auteurs actually refused to allow me to produce my own play in my own theatre. And so," she continued, now smiling, "I place myself and my work at the mercy of a London audience."

Pressed for particulars of her future plans, Mme. Sarah Bernhardt kindly gave me her program. Three weeks in London, then touring in the provinces, where she will appear with Mrs. Patrick Campbell in Maeterlinck's "Pelleas et Melisande," then off to South America and back again in Paris for the winter, where she will produce "Sainte Therese," a drama in verse by M. Catulle Mendes. Another interesting item of the program is the revising of the proof sheets of "Les Memoires de Sarah Bernhardt," which will be published in the autumn, simultaneously in Paris, London and New York.

"But when," I asked, "do you rest?"

"Oh, I may spend a few days at my seaside villa in Brittany, where I sometimes turn to decorative art for relaxation." Mme. Bernhardt went on to tell me that she is fond of casting fish in plaster molds, to form quaint designs in the "art nouveau" style. "I work them," she said, "in marble, bronze, silver or gold. I am now engaged on a decorative fountain in this style. Some of my designs have been adapted and used rather effectively, I think, for jewelry by the famous Lalique. I quite recently presented Edmond Rostrand with a fish of my own molding, in gold, with eyes of opal."

Mme. Bernhardt rose, and with a parting wish for the success of "Adrienne Lecouvreur" I took leave of the great artiste, "Reine de l'Attitude et Princesse des Gestes."

Gossip from Stageland.

Florence Lester has been engaged by Broadhurst & Currie to be featured in the title role of "Texas."

George Ade is completing a play for Charles Frohman. It will be produced with Joseph Wheelock, jr., in the star part.

Blanche Walsh will begin her tour with her last season's success, "The Woman in the Case," in Cincinnati on Labor day.

Fay Davis, who is now in England, will return to America in November and appear in the new comedy, "All-of-a-Sudden Peggy."

Keeping the lid on in St. Louis has had one good effect. It has enabled Melbourne MacDowell to fill an engagement at the Suburban garden.

Belle Gold, the "woman darky delineator," as the old-time show bills would say, will play a leading role in support of McIntyre and Heath in "The Ham Tree."

In "The Rogers Brothers in Ireland" all the characters except the Rogers brothers are supposed to be Irish and speak with a brogue. The brothers will not abandon their Dutch dialect.

Klaw & Erlanger have begun the new theatrical season most auspiciously. They will have twelve great attractions, employing nearly 3,000 people, before the public by the first day of January.

Paula Edwardes is enroute to New York after a summer spent in Algiers. The young prima donna will begin rehearsals of her new musical comedy early in September, and is scheduled to open her season in October.

Carol McComas, whose father is a United States judge in Los Angeles, Cal., plays the "principal boy" in Klaw & Erlanger's production of "The Pearl and the Pumpkin." This is Miss McComas' first role in this line of stage work. She fills it well.

The Shuberts have purchased from Agnes and Egerton Castle the dramatic rights to their novel, "The Secret Orchard." Channing Pollock, whose stage version of "In the Bishop's Carriage" was produced last Monday at Hartford, will make the adaptation.

Grace Von Studdiford has been engaged for the new musical comedy which is to start the season of the Weber Musical Hall, New York, in September. The comedy is the work of George M. Cohan, Maurice Levi and Edgar Smith. Meantime she is resting at her pretty home near St. Louis.

C. M. S. McLellan, author of "Leah Kleschna," has written a comedy called "On the Love Path," which will be produced early in September at the Haymarket theater, London, the American rights of which have been secured by Charles Frohman.

Evie Green is giving a series of ballad and song recitals in London with great success, making a feature of recitations of children's poems by the late Eugene Field. Miss Green will sail for America the latter part of August to begin rehearsals of "The Duchess of Dantzic."

Manager Ben Harris, it is reported, has arranged a world tour for Putnam Bradlee Strong and May Yohe, starting from San Francisco to Honolulu, thence to the Philippines, into China, Japan, India, South Africa and Europe, going finally from London to New York.

Charles Frohman has arranged with Sir Charles Wyndham and Mary Moore to return to America after the new year for a fifteen weeks' tour. He has also arranged to bring over Sir Henry Irving, who comes a year from next October for his farewell tour. John Hare will also be seen that season in America.

Viola Allen has acquired the rights for a play by Comyne Carr which she will reserve for future use. Mr. Carr was long associated with Sir Henry Irving in the management of the Lyceum theater, London, and his dramatization of "Oliver Twist" was lately presented by Beerbohm Tree at His Majesty's theater, London. Next season Miss Allen is to appear in a play by Clyde Fitch.

At the Illinois theater, Chicago, last Sunday night Richard Carle, in "The Mayor of Tokio," opened an engagement of three weeks. The piece has already enjoyed a prosperous run of eight weeks at the Studebaker theater, and when the engagement is completed Mr. Carle will hold the record for the longest consecutive run of any of the numerous shows which have played Chicago during the present summer.

In "The Catch of the Season," the English musical comedy success, which Charles Frohman produces at Daly's, New York, in September, Edna May will play the part of Angela Chrystal, whose domineering stepmother and envious sisters have made of her another Cinderella. In addition to many new songs, Miss May will have still more opportunities for acting than in "The School Girl," and it will be remembered how pleasing her "acting" scenes were in that musical play.

Klaw & Erlanger have engaged Dorothy Rossmore to play Iras in "Ben Hur" the coming season. Other principals engaged, most of whom have been with this company for several years, are Alphonz Ethier, who will play Ben Hur; Charles Riegal, A. W. Harriss, Robert McWade, jr., Henry Weaver, Judius McVicker, Charles Canfield, James Cooley, Joseph Rahley, J. C. Robinson, Edward Buchanan, Mabel Mortimer, Josephine Morse, Stella Boniface Weaver and Daisy Robinson.

The season at the Empire theater, New York, will be opened in September, as always, with John Drew, whom Charles Frohman will present in an American character in a new play by Augustus Thomas. Margaret Dale will continue as his leading woman. Mr. Drew's engagement will be followed by Maude Adams' season in the Barrie play, "Peter's Pan." During rehearsals of this play Mr. Barrie proposes to come to New York. In Peter's Pan" Miss Adams will again impersonate the character of a boy. The piece is in nine scenes and will require fully seventy people.

The Show, which is published by the Shuberts at 10 cents a year, has just made its appearance for August. This last number of the little magazine is infinitely more attractive than any of its interesting predecessors. The illustrations include a striking cover design by Jack Chamberlain, a sketch of "The Matinee Girl" by Francis Sagerson and seven half-tone portraits of prominent players. Short stories and verses are contributed by Lillian Russell, Charles Hanson Towne, H. L. Mencken, Willis Steell, Hector Rosenfeld, Walter Eaton and Elfrid Bingham. It may be truthfully said of The Show that it is easy to read and hard to forget.

Louis James announces his plans for the coming season as follows: He will appear under the management of J. J. Coleman in sumptuous revivals of "Virginius," "Ingomar" and "Richelieu," complete in every detail, scenery, costumes and accessories, and supported by a company whose equal, we are assured, has not been seen since the palmy day of the '80's. He will begin these revivals at Ford's opera house early in September, then will make an extensive tour of the principal cities, returning to New York after the holidays. This will be the first time "Virginius" has been played as a production on Broadway in almost a decade, and to the present generation ought to be a novelty and a treat.

Winston Churchill, who wrote "The Crisis" and "The Crossing," is himself to send on the road the coming season a dramatization of the last named novel. James K. Hackett had an option on this play, but when he decided not to use it the author determined to secure the profits himself, and, as he is a rich man, can give to his new theatrical enterprise all the financial backing that is needed. The dramatization has been made by Louis Evan Shipman, and both author and playwright are confident that the new play will duplicate the success of "The Crisis." The tour of the company has been booked for a long season, the play opening in Cleveland early in October. A strong company will be secured, to be headed by John Blair and Mabel Burt.

The Shuberts, who have announced their intention of booking their houses and attractions hereafter in absolute independence of the Theatrical trust, acquired four new theaters last week. This quartet includes the Colonial theater, Cleveland; the Empire theater, Newark; the Lyceum theater, Baltimore, and the Duquesne theater, Pittsburg, which last place of amusement is to be known henceforth as the Belasco. These additions give the Shuberts twenty-seven places of amusement, the bookings for which, made up of their own stars and those of David Belasco and Harrison Grey Fiske, comprise such players as Sarah Bernhardt, Ada Rehan, Mrs. Fiske, Mrs. Leslie Carter, David Warfield, Blanche Bates, Jefferson de Angelis, Lillian Russell, De Wolf Hopper, Henry Miller and Margaret Anglin.

Out of the Ordinary

A Maine newspaper inadvertently got the headline "News About Lobsters" over the "local mention" or personals about the prominent citizens.

The total number of all known varieties of postage stamps used by the governments of the world up to date is 19,342. Salvador, the smallest of the Central American republics, has issued 450 different kinds, more than any other country.

A Pittsburg small boy attended a prayer-meeting and listened to petitions for financial aid to the cause of the struggling mission. After the prayer meeting, the small boy, being of an intensely practical mind, stole $10 from a till and turned the entire sum over to the needy cause.

A tramp broke into an undertaking shop in Holland recently and went to sleep in a coffin. He was arrested and the authorities had trouble to find the proper charge to make against him. Finally he was sent to jail for four months for usurping a place that rightfully belonged to the dead.

Prof. James R. Adams of Dowie's Zion City Ministerial college, has started to walk to New York. The trip is in the nature of a vacation, but it is also to demonstrate that raw foods, such as unbaked bread, cereals of all kinds, fruits and nuts, are more nourishing than steaks, chops and other meats.

The Massachusetts State Park commission refuses to acknowledge automobiles as pleasure carriages, although they are used chiefly everywhere for that purpose. The commission has labeled certain reserved roadways in the parks with this notice: "For pleasure vehicles only; motor carriages not allowed."

Passengers from the White mountains are remarking on the ingenuity displayed by a New Hampshire farmer who has a cornfield near the tracks up in the middle of the state. Instead of an upright scarecrow, this man has placed his on its knees in a position which indicates that the "man" is busy weeding corn. The deception is said to be the most perfect yet conceived.

Leonora Romaldo, the wife of a farm hand at Vilacienso, near Burgos, has awakened from a trance which has lasted thirty-one years. The case has been under the close observation of medical experts during the whole of that time, and by their instructions liquid food was regularly administered by a tube placed in the mouth of the sleeping woman. She has now regained her senses, but cannot be persuaded that she has slept for years. A curious feature of the case is that she remembers the incidents of her girlhood up to the time she fell into the trance.

Labor and Industry

There are more than 900 women teamsters and draymen in the United States.

A concrete chimney completed recently for a Tacoma smelter is 307 feet in height and is said to be the highest in the world of its kind.

There are now in California 35,000 Japanese, and on the whole length of the coast fully 100,000, the majority having arrived in the last five years.

Illinois has 37,000 coal miners, 60 per cent being foreign-born, the majority, arriving since 1894, having taken the places of Americans and Americanized miners from western Europe.

Of the stenographers and typewriters in the United States 76 per cent are women. Of the school teachers 67.4 per cent are women, and in some of the New England states 91 per cent are women.

The board of directors of the Bourne mills, Fall River, Mass., has declared an advance dividend of 2½ per cent on the wages of its 700 employes for the four months ending December 2, 1903. The dividend will be paid to employes December 23. Sharing profits with employes has been the practice of the Bourne mills for many years.

Although women are entering into the industrial field in increasing numbers, in many industries they are merely taking the place of children. The proportionate number of children in the manufacturing industries has been constantly decreasing, and from some industries they have been altogether excluded, women taking their places.

It is reported that two Nova Scotia men, one of whom is an enterprising blacksmith, have discovered a method of hardening copper. To demonstrate the degree of hardening that may be attained by the new method the blacksmith has forged a crude razor out of the new material, and it is announced that this has an edge which permits of actual shaving. The matter is being followed by the American consul at Halifax.

In the United States there are 5,319,912 women and girls employed outside their own homes, one-half of whom are under 25 years of age. One-tenth of the women engaged in manufacturing industries are married. Women constitute 18.4 per cent of the whole number of workers, as shown by the census of occupation tables, but since they do not work so steadily as men the proportion of female labor is considerably less than 18.4 per cent.

Music and Musical Notes

IN getting up any sort of a musical subscription list, there is one obstacle encountered which really outweighs all others, viz: the non-musical husband of the musical wife. It suppose it would be rank disrespect to refer to him as "the rag-time husband;" however, that is what he really is. He likes "The Good Old Summer Time," and "Just Kiss Yo'self Good-bye'" and will go gleefully to hear a park band, but a classical concert makes him groan with weariness, and to drag him to one is a bigger bargain than most women want to enter into. Of all the hideous things, the worst is to go to hear something that you particularly care for, (music, the theatre, readings), with a person who sits beside you yawning with ennui. I'd like to convert the unmusical husbands, but failing that, why is it that their helpmeets who care for music cannot go bravely to good recitals alone, or with some woman friend? Last winter I heard a girl friend, twenty-five years old, say that she missed Ysaye when she was crazy to hear him, because her brother couldn't take her! To me the situation seemed absurd. Women nowadays can go about alone with such absolute safety. Men do not give up their pet amusements when they marry (at least they shouldn't, and the woman who asks it is very foolish); why should a wife give up the things she is fond of? For some unknown reason music is the first thing to disappear in the background, that is here in the west. An appreciation of good music doesn't confer the same degree of culture and ample education out here that it does in the east. We have not arrived at that stage of cosmopolitan life. When our prominent business men begin to take an interest in that side of affairs we shall have something solid to stand on. Our commercial life is growing; we have city clubs, country clubs, boulevards, fine horses, good clothes. The time is pretty nearly ripe to begin on music and good paintings, and the phase of existence which caters to beauty in all its various forms. If the wives who really love good music stay away from it "because they don't like to leave their husbands;" what is left but ruin and desolation? The entire fabric of a possible structure is rent. I contend that these wives ought to go to all good concerts and occasionally inveigle their husbands for a number or two. A beginning must be made somehow.

Sir Edgar Elgar while in New York stirred up a fine hornets' nest when he made bold to criticise the American national airs. I was moved to make a few remarks on the subject myself last week. The following communication covers a little more surface and is most apropos:

OMAHA, Aug. 4.—To the Musical Editor of The Bee: Your remarks in last Sunday's issue anent the criticisms of Sir Edward Elgar on the American and English "national" airs were pat enough, but hardly went as far as some of us might wish. It will be admitted without dispute that the airs that have been consecrated as "national" are crude and but a little ways removed from barbaric, but when one considers the end, do not the means appear justified in this instance? The so-called national airs were not designed for the edification of musically cultured people, but are primarily intended for the uses of the masses, and such as have written scores are to be rendered on the simplest of musical instruments. It would be absurd to undertake a Beethoven symphony or a Mozart mass on the fife and drum, just as the rendition of "Yankee Doodle" in its simplicity by a full orchestra would be absurd. But consider the effect. When one hears a classic composition the higher and nobler emotions are appealed to, and, if any, the effect is an uplift of the soul, turning the thought to higher things and leading the mind out onto a plane above and beyond that of the normal. But when it comes to "the crash of the rolling drum and the trumpet that sings of fame" we must have something simpler. Imagine a regiment going into battle to the strains of a Wagnerian prelude or a Mascagni intermezzo. Your artistic nature revolts at this; of course it does, but you can think of kilted Highlanders swinging along in battle front to the skirling of that acme of "musical" abominations, the bagpipe. The band of the First Colorado was noted as the finest among the volunteer organizations that went to Manila, and its concerts on the Escolto and the Prado were enjoyed by thousands who appreciate the best of compositions; but the day the band marched through the surf into the battle that preceded the capitulation of the city it played "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old-Town Tonight." The airs Sir Edward complains of are written better than he wots, for they touch the elemental in man's nature, and patriotism is essentially an elementary passion, just as is the willingness to fight. Thus, it appears to me, that despite the strictures of the eminent English musical authority, we will have to be content to march to death and glory to the airs that led our fathers along the same path. "Yankee Doodle," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," "The Campbells Are Coming," "McLeod's Reel," "Bonaparte's Retreat" and all that glorious host of quicksteps will stir the blood and give a lissome lightness to weary feet as no classic possibly can. Our military bands will render the highest and best at guard mount and on dress parade, and the weekly concerts at the post will continue to be classic, but when the flag is unfurled at the head of the regiment and the order to advance is given the tune the band plays will be one that is familiar and has a fighting strain in it.

SIMPLICISSIMUS.

Also I have received the music to a new "America," arranged for school use by Ole Vikoren of Holdrege, Neb. The hymn is good, but it is safe to say that the old tune will cling to the end of time.

The program below was given by Miss Louise Ormsby of Central City at her home on July 15. This young woman has spent several years studying abroad, and now resides in New York, where she holds the position of soprano soloist in the Fifth Avenue synagogue, also singing Sundays at the Summer Baptist church in Brooklyn:

PROGRAM.

Aria—Le Cid ..... Massenet

(a) Night and Dawn ..... Fairfield
(b) Daffodils Are Here ..... Ronald
(c) Out of the Darkness ..... d'Hardelot
(d) Japanese Love Song ..... Clayton Thomas

(a) An ein Veilchen ..... Brahms
(b) Feldeinsamkeit ..... Brahms
(c) Es Blinkt der Thau ..... Rubenstein
(d) Mattinata ..... Tosti

(a) When You Speak to Me ..... d'Hardelot
(b) At Twilight ..... Nevin
(c) Mighty Like a Rose (by request) ..... Nevin
(d) Happy Song ..... Del Riego

MARY LEARNED.

Notes and Personals.

Miss Wilhelmina Lowe is visiting at Fort Crook, having finished her season's work with Sousa's band.

The Boston Symphony orchestra is giving a series of ten Sunday evening concerts at the Casino in Bar Harbor.

Mr. Joseph Gahm is working on his own compositions this summer and publishers are coming his way. He is taking his vacation is and around Chicago because of Mrs. Gahm, who is studying with Tramonti, the famous harpist whom Theodore Thomas secured for his orchestra a year or two before his death. He (Tramonti) has given Mrs. Gahm great encouragement and has warmly complimented her on her playing. Mr. Gahm is not in Chicago on any business which might end in his staying there. He will resume work in Omaha right early in September.

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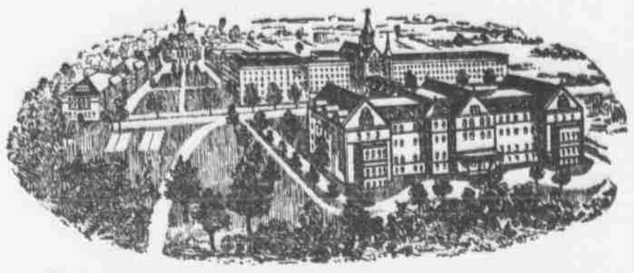

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