

THE NEW PLAYS "The Sign on the Door" An Exciting Melodrama By CHARLES DARNTON

By all odds the most villainous melodrama of the season—and I don't mean this in a derogative sense—is "The Sign on the Door" at the Republic Theatre, for this thriller by Channing Pollock has such a good villain that when he is shot in the second act, you might be pardoned for sighing: "Too bad!" Unhappily, he's as dead as a door nail. Devereaux—Frank, not Jack—dies young for the good of the play. Regrettably, I realize that if he should turn over, get on his feet and announce, "Well, boys, here I go again!" he would embarrass the plot. Circumstances compel him to remain dead. The "big score" depends upon his lying still while the man who has shot him picks up the sign "Do Not Disturb Me," pins it on the door, steals out, locks the door, and leaves his wife, hidden in an adjoining room, to make the most of the situation. As situations go, this is one of the cleverest in the atrocious history of melodrama. The wife of the man who kills Devereaux has come to the apartment to "save" her stepdaughter from the villain. Five years before the shooting she was taken to a bad restaurant by Devereaux and given a very bad time. In fact, the place was "ruined." Some girls can't have a pleasant, innocent time no matter where they go. The secular thing about this place was that the waiter gave the simple girl from Dayton, O., a tip instead of taking a tip. It was her first night out in New York, and after the opera she entertained the supper-table talk with references to more or less popular authors. But Devereaux, the low-browed villain, couldn't be drawn into even so common a discussion as the prose style of Walter Pater. He suggested more intimate things, the Dayton lady screamed, and the police closed the case. The waiter, who gave the girl from Dayton a friendly tip! He straightway assures the husband that a case of self-defense will enable him to live happily ever after. Lowell Sherman plays the villain with a true sense of false values; Mary Ryan suffers dutifully as the unhappy heroine, and Lee Baker as the husband from Texas speaks of her fondly as "good cattle" and tight on the shoulder. You may take "The Sign on the Door" as a ventful, exciting melodrama.

About Plays and Players By BIDE DUDLEY

THE Messrs. Shubert are announcing several changes in the line-up of attractions at their New York theatres, effective during the week beginning Jan. 5. "The Light of the World," a new drama, will be produced at the Lyric by Comstock & Gest, displacing "The Rose of China," which will go on tour. A new musical play will be displayed at the Central, following the engagement of "The Little Blue Devil," which is soon to end. Leo Driehausen will open a New York engagement under Leo Shubert's direction at the Booth in "The Purple Mask," and arrangements will be made for "Frisivolities of 1919," now in Boston, and "As You Were," another musical piece in which Sam Bernard and Irene Bordoni are featured, to come to Broadway.

WHITE IN TOWN. Frank White, dramatic critic of the Denver Post, is visiting New York and taking in the Broadway shows. He says an effort probably will be made next summer to re-establish the Elitch Gardens stock company along the lines of ten years ago. "If we have a stock company out there next summer," said Mr. White, "we'll have a youthful one." Whereupon Louis Robie, Pete Rice and Herman Bach, who were dining at the same table with Mr. White at the Friars, applied for jobs.

"MECCA" SCENERY HERE. The first shipment of scenery for "Mecca," the big Orinatal extravaganza which F. Ray Comstock and Morris Gest will present at the Century in February, arrived yesterday from England on the Massachusetts. There are fifteen scenes in the three acts of the show and the scenery which arrived made up the settings of the entire first act. Morris Gest last night denied a report that "Mecca" would be first presented in Chicago. A contract with Oscar Ascho will compel Comstock & Gest to offer it at the Century before March 1.

"GRASS WIDOW" MONDAY. The new theatrical firm of Corey & Stark will launch "The Grass Widow," the Pollock-Wolf-Hirsch musical piece, Monday night, in Eastern P.A. The company will play south to New Orleans and then return North for a Chicago engagement.

TWO WIVES. He didn't want Mary, for Mary was plain And wore home-made clothing and hats; Her old-fashioned ways rather gave him a pain, For Joe wore high collars and aprons. And so he wed Bea, who was quite up to date, For Bea loved the fustled and such. "At last," he declared, "I've located a mate With brains and who pleases me much." A year passed along and he found that his life Was not what he thought it would be; The holes in his socks didn't worry his wife; She'd calmly announce: "I can't see Why I should be called on to darn hose for you." You married a wife, not a slave, Why wear woman's socks? Go and purchase some new. And not a red cent could he save. Joe didn't want Mary, so Mary became The wife of another, Tom Brown.

GOSSIP. Renold Wolf received a book called "Wives" for Christmas. John Mullin was the recipient of a brick, nicely wrapped up. Vivienne Segal gave her manager a pretty green \$100 bill. Many thanks to the hundreds who sent us Christmas cards! "The Police" played to \$81,750 in two weeks in Detroit. Suzanne Wills entertained the "Nightie Night" company at Richard Bennett's matinee at the Playhouse yesterday. Marjorie Pringle is visiting her parents in Hamilton, Ont. She has been singing in large film theatres over the country. Concerts will be given at the Winter Garden, Lyric, 44th Street, Central, Century and Manhattan Opera House to-morrow night. Cleve Kinkaid's new play, "The Mood of the Moon," will open in New Haven Monday night. Fifty New Jersey insurance agents are seeing "The Passing Show" at the Winter Garden when 10-day. Jane Cowi will wear hoopskirts in "Smilin' Through" at the Broadhurst next Tuesday. Fred Hillbrand writes from Chicago that his contract with Joe Gates will expire with the present season. An extra performance of "Rusland" will be given at the Columbia Theatre New Year's Eve at 11:45 o'clock. There will be special celebrations New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, afternoon and evening, at Terrace Garden Dance Palace and Pabst Harlem Dance. Nellie Revelle, who is ill in St. Vincent's hospital, has a Christmas tree, you bet, with remembrances from more than 100 well known Broadwayites. Nellie forgot her pain and smiled all day. The Greenroom Club will have a beefsteak party to-morrow night, with W. J. Ferguson of "The Little Hopper" as the guest of honor. George Stacy, Harry C. Browne and the Stuart Sisters of the same company will be guests of the Pleiades Club.

RESOLUTIONS. The time will soon be here to Make 'em, Ditto, ditto, ditto, Break 'em. A THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY. Milt Hobuck of Wellsville, whom the Optic referred to as an idiot, has cancelled his subscription and begun borrowing. FOOLISHMENT. A Bronzville old lady named Grry Was cr'ry to be a film star. Said she: "I ain't pretty, But folks say I'm witt'y." Now wouldn't that give you a jarr?

FROM THE CHESTNUT TREE. Editor's Assistant—What'll I do with this poem called "The Stream"? Editor—Put it in the "Current Verse" column. HIS MISAPPREHENSION. "Hi! Whar ar I at?" feebly demanded Mr. Gap Johnson of Rumpus Ridge, Ark., after the accident. "What's been coming off around yer, anyway?" "You drove on to the railroad crossing just in time to be struck by the flyer," replied the physician. "The engine demolished your wagon, and—"

"Aw, that's it?" Must have sorter knocked me plumb out of my head for a spell, for I shore thought my fourteen children had mobbed me for something or nuther they didn't like. —Kansas City Star.

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LITTLE MARY MIXUP



JOE'S CAR



LEAVE IT TO LOU



Bub Pulls Some Rough Stuff!

An' Use No Hooks, Too!

She's Game for Anything!

Well, Joe, Make Alterations on Your Feet!

It's an Egg With a Past, Say We!