

**DISCOVERED!** The apex of theatrical preparedness!

It is the One Million Dollar army and chorus of the Friars, who begin their All-Star Frolic—1916 mood—with a performance at the New Amsterdam Theatre next Sunday night.

When Interlocutor Vaughn Comfort pronounces those magic words of minstrelsy, "Gentlemen, be seated," this million dollar chorus, together with stars whose par value can be reckoned only by geometrical progression in Rockefellerian digits, will tap their tambos twice and sink gracefully into their chairs in the semi-circular embankment which always is the scenic piece de resistance of a minstrel first part.

(Words must be spent like water on such an expensive description as this.)

Later in the show the million dollar choruses will appear as soldiers. They will carry guns and drill—a million dollar army.

It makes the oldtime minstrel who used to go on tour without even a bodyguard of ten dollars shudder at his ardent bravery. When he recalls how often he began a season with no more than the four bones which he used as end man he feels like an abject hero.

Every Friar, from Abbot George M. Cohan down to the newest and least known member of the club, agrees that the Frolic this year is the richest show that ever took the road. It is full of surprises, full of new songs, full of new sketches—all especially arranged and written by members of the club who are leaders in their professions.

The 1916 Frolic comes as a jubilant celebration of the completion of the club's new Monastery, situated in Forty-eighth Street, near Sixth Avenue. This is another million dollar proposition and something the Friars are justly proud of. Many a member has not so good a home of his own.

From the advance notices right up to the million dollar chorus the whole Frolic is a mighty example of the efficiency and power of preparedness. Only he who has had a peek at the rehearsals which have been going on in Bryant Hall for weeks—and which are still going on—has any idea of the enormous



Louis Mann's Hat.

amount of labor and energy that the Friars have put into their entertainment.

Every day at or about high noon the million dollar chorus has gathered there. Jim Gorman has taken it in charge. George Botsford has seated himself before the decollete piano,

**BEHIND SCENES WITH "THE FRIARS"**

By THOMAS T. HOYNE.

leaned over and taken off the piano's shinguard. Then the work has begun. And it has been real work, too.

Any one who has watched the grilling, emaciating drilling of the million dollar army can only wonder how it is possible for an Amazon army, which must march hundreds of miles annually in a burlesque show, to retain its impressive embonpoint. Members of the Friars' army, like Richardson Webster and Jack Hobby, for example, who looked something like taxicabs when they began their daily drill, now more closely resemble the lithe, clean-cut motorcycle.

Mr. Hill and myself attended a rehearsal of the Frolic one day last week. It was an awakening for us. We never knew before that players had to be such hard workers. After seeing five dancers who are stars work an hour to perfect a few steps that will take up about fifteen seconds of the performance we came to the conclusion that an impatient man



George Cohan Directing.

should never allow himself to be sicked on by Terpsichore.

Manager Fred Block met us outside the rehearsal hall. Before allowing us to enter he swore us to secrecy with regard to certain things that we might see or hear. Then he showed us a letter from President Wilson accepting an invitation to attend the Friars' performance at Baltimore on May 30 and bade us step into the hall.

We picked out a couple of seats in the bleachers and looked about. The million dollar chorus was grouped around the piano practicing songs. The field was encircled by a fringe of performers who looked on and rooted at intervals.

Lew Dockstader and George Primrose watched the proceedings contemplatively. Past masters in minstrelsy, they stood on the sideline like coaches at a football game.

Harry Sweatman joined us on the bleachers and offered us the following strip of information: "Irving Berlin has written another knock-out."

James J. Corbett, who was sitting near us, shifted uneasily and unconsciously rubbed the knuckles of his left hand.



The Million Dollar Chorus in Action.

Friar Sweatman, by the way, is the wardrobe mistress of the troupe.

"Every one of the hundred who go on the tour," said he, "will carry a canvas telescope containing linen, neckties, gloves, shirt buttons, safety pins and other necessities for all of the seventeen performances. Each telescope will contain seventeen shirt fronts, seventeen collars, seventeen pairs of cuffs, seventeen neckties, and seventeen of everything else that is required fresh for each show."

General Manager Sam Harris arrived while the chorus was arranging chairs in semicircles for the first part. He sat down near the piano and watched the work.

"Now, boys!" cried Friar Botsford from the piano.

The million dollar chorus plunged into the overture, accompanying their singing with the clatter of rattling bones. A moment later they shifted from the bones to tambourines.

George Whiting, who had just arrived from the Far West, where he cancelled vaudeville time in order to make the tour with the Friars, joined us on the bleachers. He brought a small budget of news with him. He said that the climate in California is continuing its fine record, but his front page story was that Bill Fogarty has gone to Louisville in the interest of the sport of kings.

With a crash of tambourines the singing stopped and the million dollar chorus was called to arms. Each man picked up a gun cheerfully, and for the next fifteen minutes the soldiers went through as intricate a drill as any army could want.

After going through that drill day after day for weeks every man in the Friars' million dollar army—if duty calls—ought to be able to get killed in battle as easily as a regular general.

Abbot George M. Cohan, Louis Mann, Frank Tinney and others were busy rehearsing in an-

other room. A member of the press committee led us to the door of this room on tiptoe. We were allowed to peek through a crack at the stars inside, but they didn't seem to like this, so we went back to our bleacher seats. If they had known that I can't get an ear full without an ear trumpet they probably would have let me listen in wholesale quantities, but there was no time to explain.

The million dollar army finished its drill and Abbot Cohan came out of the sanctum into which we had peeked and took charge of the rehearsal of a screamingly funny "nigger" after-piece. Among the principals who rehearsed in this were Neil O'Brien, George Sidney and Andrew Mack. Undoubtedly, I am leaving out some names, but the army and other Friars crowded around the players so closely, and laughed so hard at Cohan's lines (for the sketch was written by the great George M.), that it was impossible to "make" all of those who took part, from our ocular angle.

There is one number on the programme of the Frolic that is certain to be an enormous hit. This is a brand new song written by Abbot Cohan, and sung by him and five others. It was something to hear this song rehearsed and to see the dance which is to accompany it articulated before our eyes.

Doyle and Dixon, Tom Dingle, George Sidney, Laddie Cliff and Cohan sang the song and worked out the dance. It was like putting a jig-saw puzzle together. One of the sextet would fit a step into a line of the song. He would practise the combination for a minute, modify it, and then offer the result to the others for trial.

I had always supposed that minstrels got their steps out of a manual, just as they got their jokes. I presumed there was some standard handbook on dancing—with copious foot-

notes, of course—which explained every known step and illustrated it with a diagram.

Such is not the case at all. At least it is not the case with the Friars' sextet dance. This was worked out like a problem—a sextet problem. It depends for its success on many things, just like a Presidential campaign, or a three-horse parlay. It is a conglomerate affair. We watched it grow with interest.

Tom Dingle put a slide into the dance. Then George Cohan mixed in a couple of knee-wrenches. Doyle and Dixon stirred in some kicks, and Laddie Cliff inserted a half-turn and a bend. George Sidney wanted to take the bend out again, but the rest wouldn't let him. He didn't add any steps, but contented himself with urging his feet to assimilate the mixture as it was.



George Sidney Pas Seuls.

It is a wonderful dance, and the song is quite likely to prove a riot. It is a typical George M. Cohan song, with "Yankee Doodle" and a dash of American flag in it. The title of the song is—(deleted by the Friars' censor), and you will be trying to whistle it next week.

A battle between composers and pianos is a number on the programme of the Frolic that could not be rehearsed at Bryant Hall. There was not enough room there, as each composer had to be served with an individual piano for the act.

Irving Berlin and other composers who will appear in the "Massacre of Melody" have been gathering at Knabe Hall every evening at 8 o'clock. There they have run over scores, filling the air with twisted harmony, grace notes and broken bits of syncopated time.

Cartoonists, who are quite as peculiar as pianists, also had a place of their very own for rehearsal. They have been working over their act, as outlined by its author, at the Palace Theatre every morning.

A writer of considerable fame, who is one of the Friars, told me all this as we sat on the

Bryant Hall bleachers. I have deleted his name out of friendship for him. He said:

"The Cartoonists' sketch is sure to be a great drawing card."

Then he went away from us. Manager Block, who had overheard the remark, assured us that there is not a line of such low calibre in the whole Frolic.

"If you put that line in your story," said he, "let it go as your own stuff, or pretend that you heard it years ago at a children's party. It wouldn't do the Friars any good to be associated with a line like that."

The Friars will travel on their tour in a special train, carrying along with them their own band of forty pieces. In every city where they give a performance they will appear in a regular "minstrel" parade.

The costume for the street parades has been selected with great care. Each man will wear a gray duster, trimmed with green. He will carry in his hand a swagger stick, and uphold upon his head a straw hat with a brown and white band. Brown and white are the Friars' colors.

Each star will be attended in the parade by a boy carrying a banner on which is blazoned the name of the star. This will obviate embarrassing questions and answers on the part of the spectators, such as, "Who's that ugly man marching third from the end?" "That! Why, that's handsome Jack Dalton."

From New York the Friars will go to Atlantic City. Then they play Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, Buffalo, Rochester, Boston and Providence.

At Providence, when the Friars gather on the stage in a reproduction of the grill room of the new Monastery and sing the Friars' song which closes the show, they will bring to a conclusion the greatest Frolic they have ever undertaken.

Providence is the home town of Abbot Cohan.



Friar Sam Harris.

and it was here that Lew Dockstader on a former Frolic pulled that famous joke: "Geowge, youah frien's in youah home town suhainly give you a fine reception, but look you you had to bring along with you to get it."

**THE CHATEAU D'AUSPERGE**

From the German of Gert Hartenau.

(The sketch which follows, by Gert Hartenau, is described by him as a "war experience." It is an experience common to all wars and deals with a situation familiar in fiction and in drama, but handled here with admirable vivacity and a spice of originality. The efforts of a grandmother and a sister to hide a wounded relative, exposed to captivity, must always excite sympathy, even in the hearts of the captors who frustrate this work of piety and affection. It is pleasant to think that the appeal of such a very human predicament is still powerful, even in this war of embittered ferocity and calloused inhumanity. Mr. Hartenau's story was written as a contribution to the "Berliner Morgen Post.")

FOR three days now Lieutenant Joachim von Breiten, with twenty-five men of his company, had made his quarters in the ancient and imposing chateau. But he had never had the honor of being received by the chateau's mistress, the Countess d'Ausperge, who, with her granddaughter, lived there a solitary, not to say an unsocial, existence.

Joachim von Breiten had naturally had his presence announced to the elderly Countess on taking possession. The majordomo had brought him word that the gracious lady greatly regretted that both she and her granddaughter were too indisposed to receive anybody. She hoped, however, that the commandant would feel free to make such use of the chateau as might suit his convenience.

At first the young officer thought nothing of this polite apology, for he realized that it could not be very agreeable to be obliged so suddenly to welcome a victorious enemy into one's household. But in the end one must observe the conventions, and after three days the chateau should have recovered enough self-control to cease from ignoring him in so noticeable a fashion.

The lieutenant stretched himself on the reclining chair in his comfortable room, smoked a cigarette and ruminated. Suddenly he sprang up, straightened out his uniform and walked hurriedly to and fro.

"It was self-understood," he said to himself, "in the order which I received to occupy the chateau, that I should inspect all the occupants and assume full control over them."

Yes; and he had neglected to do that! He had made all the servants and retainers present themselves; but he had allowed an exception in the case of the old Countess and her granddaughter. He had overacted the cavalier, been too laxly respectful.

It might not be safe to take anything for granted! Who was going to guarantee that the Countess was not a spy, a dangerous person, planning some evil turn? Such things

had happened. In war everything is fair—everything. And he, Joachim von Breiten, would rather be forehanded and himself anticipate any plots that were being hatched in his neighborhood.

"Nay, nay," he murmured, with a smile; "it is not so easy as that, meine Gnädigste; I must respectfully ask you to play fair with me."

Herr von Breiten stepped energetically to the writing table and pushed an electric button. To his orderly, who at once appeared, he gave instructions to summon the majordomo. The orderly made a stiff, military turn, vanished and soon came back with the functionary in question.

The pale, servile-looking steward cast a lurking glance at the officer.

"Monsieur le Commandant has some directions to give?" he asked eagerly, with an air of deep submission.

"Yes," nodded von Breiten. "You are the soul of everything here in this chateau, are you not?"

"You do me too much honor."

"No polite evasions, please. I expect a simple answer."

The majordomo shrugged his shoulders.

"I have been put in charge of affairs during the war, Monsieur le Commandant."

"And the mistress of the chateau?"

"The most gracious Countess is a great sufferer."

The majordomo cast his eyes uneasily on the ground.

Herr von Breiten stared fixedly at him.

"So, so," said the officer; "but are there not other relatives of the Countess in the house who could assume the responsibility of representing her?"

"The younger Countess is also ill," remarked the Frenchman, hesitatingly.

"And is there nobody else? I warn you not to tell me an untruth!"

"Are you dissatisfied, Herr Commandant? Have you any complaints to make?" parried the other.

"No! But I want to know personally everybody who is here in the house. So you will answer my questions!"

Drops of perspiration stood on the majordomo's brow. He trembled violently, but, quickly mastering himself, raised his head and said: "No, Herr Commandant, there is nobody else."

Herr von Breiten ground his teeth with annoyance and irritation. He felt that the Frenchman was deceiving him—that the situation was queer. Still he controlled himself, lighted a cigarette with an air of indifference and nodded.

"Good!" he said. "You will announce at to the Countess and to her granddaughter

that in an hour I shall await them in the salon. If they should still be indisposed and do not wish to receive me, my duty will unfortunately compel me to pay the ladies a visit in their bedrooms."

"Herr Commandant!"

The majordomo shrank back.

"I beg the Herr Commandant not to do that!"

"It must be done, my dear sir. Duty is duty, and we are at war. So go ahead, execute my command!"

The majordomo bowed in a bewildered way and slunk out. Lieutenant von Breiten looked after him and smiled grimly. Then he turned to his orderly, who still stood at

the door, having remained in the room as a protection in a certain measure to his superior.

"Friedrich, go to Under-Officer Droste and deliver him the following order: Under-Officer Droste is to take four men and make a thorough search of the chateau. Search every room, every corner—even the cellar. Do you understand me?"

"At your service, Herr Lieutenant."

"Two men will await me there outside my door and then accompany me!"

"At your service, Herr Lieutenant."

"Any news?"

"At your service, Herr Lieutenant! Four times to-day a very pretty girl has come into

**HOW TO MAKE MONEY** - - - By Robert J. Wildhack



**VII—COUNTERFEITING.**

Take a bill—a dollar bill, in lieu of any better one—

Pen and ink, and snowy paper, free from imperfections;

Using bill the first to go by, neatly draw and letter one.

Making money's easy if you'll follow these directions.

1—Copy.

2—Copy.

**A STORY OF THE WAR**

Translated, with Comment, by William L. McPherson.

the chateau with a basket of flowers. The sentinel did not want to let her in, but the girl insisted that she was the gardener's daughter and was bringing the flowers to the family."

"That may be so," von Breiten assented. "What strikes you as peculiar about it?"

"That the girl comes so often and that she acts so nervously, Herr Lieutenant."

"Of course, that looks odd. Have you searched her?"

"Yes, Herr Lieutenant, in the guardhouse. But we found nothing suspicious on her."

"Well, arrest her and bring her before me! I may have better luck."

"At your service, Herr Lieutenant."

Friedrich made his military turn and hurried away.

Not long thereafter Lieutenant von Breiten heard outside the heavy steps of the grenadiers who were to accompany him, and when the interval set by him had elapsed he buckled on his sabre and made ready for the call of which he had given notice.

Countess d'Ausperge stood at the window of the high-ceilinged, richly and tastefully furnished reception room and observed with an angry look the hated German sentinels pacing up and down the courtyard. Of an she pressed her lips together in impotent rage and clenched her fine, soft hand, bedecked with jewels, into a fist. Constantly she glanced with an anxious expression back into the room at a young woman, who, almost completely covered with wraps, lay in a comfortable invalid chair.

In spite of her advanced age the countess was still beautiful, and her slender, elegant figure, her head thrown back, covered with a mass of snow-white hair which contrasted effectively with her dark toilette, gave her a highly impressive and aristocratic appearance.

The sudden thud of rifle butts on the floor outside the door caused her to shudder. Indignantly she turned her face toward the entrance through which Lieutenant von Breiten, carefully set up, appeared. The young officer looked sharply about to get his bearings. Then he grasped the slightly clanking sabre, clicked his heels together and bowed.

The Countess scarcely acknowledged the salutation. She tossed her head back and glanced scornfully at him.

"Pardon, Herr Commandant; isn't this a remarkable way to introduce one's self into ladies' society?" she asked, in impeccable German.

Herr von Breiten shrugged his shoulders. "Circumstances force me to it, your grace! I have the honor to see the mistress of the castle before me!"

The old lady nodded slightly and, after he had told her his name, pointed to the young

lady in the invalid's chair and presented her: "My granddaughter, Countess Antoinette! She is ill, and only because of your stringent order has she appeared here to-day, thus losing the benefit of the strict rest enjoined on her. I beg you not to incommode and still further excite her with questions."

"I cannot promise that absolutely," answered the officer, with an ironical smile. "On the contrary, I must earnestly request that you remove those thick, heavy head wraps, so that I may prove for myself the truth of what you say."

The Countess turned pale and trembled with anger.

"To doubt my word is a barbarous piece of impertinence!"

Herr von Breiten defended himself politely. "I have just been informed that the blood-stained uniform of a French cavalry officer was found in the boudoir of the countess. You will therefore understand that I have special reason to distrust any information which you may give me."

Thunderstruck, the elder Countess staggered back. "Did they dare to do that?" she cried. "Have rough, dirty soldiers' hands rummaged through the private property of a lady of my station? Truly, Herr Lieutenant, you do honor to the uncivilized standards of your country!"

"I warn you, Countess, that you will injure your case by insults. Don't forget that I am here only as a soldier and must fulfil my duty as a soldier under all circumstances and without favor to anybody. Do not force me to take severe measures, your grace!"

These calm, serious words had their effect on the Countess. She felt herself that she had gone too far. But she could not altogether repress her animosity as she asked with an injured voice: "How shall I hinder such measures—I, a defenceless woman?"

"Nothing will happen to you, Countess—I pledge you my word of honor—if you yourself reveal the hiding place of the French officer concealed in this chateau."

"You are mistaken, Herr Lieutenant," she answered. "There is no French officer here."

"And the uniform which we have found? How does the uniform of a French officer happen to be in the boudoir of the Countess?"

The Countess was trying to find a way out—that was evident. She looked about uneasily and her trembling fingers tugged at her dress.

"Your assumption is nevertheless wrong, Herr Commandant," she said, after a pause. "The uniform was left behind after the last French occupation of the chateau. The officer was wounded. I myself had the uniform