

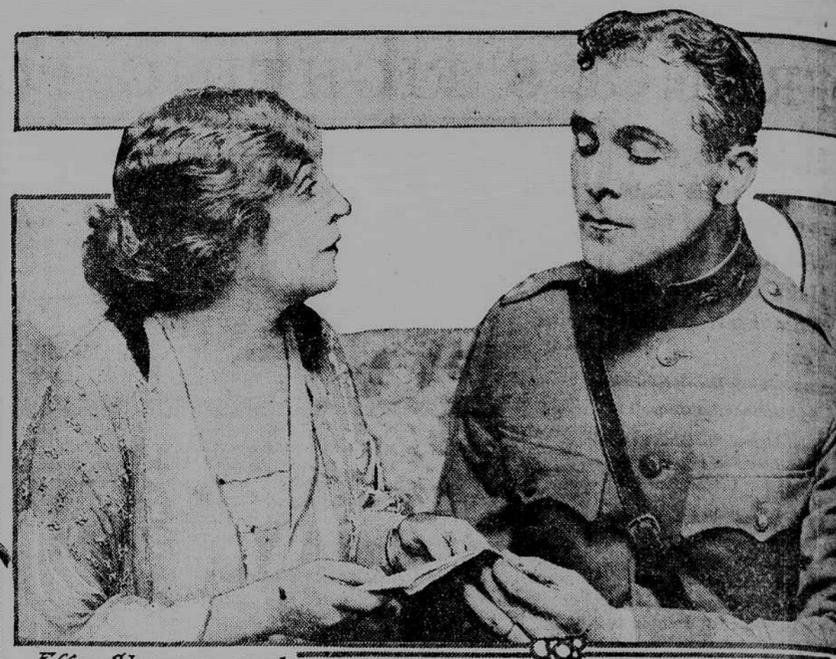
# CHRONICLE AND COMMENT OF THE STAGE



Lewis Stone and Marjorie Rambeau in "Where Poppies Bloom."



Gerda Gueda in "Everything"



Effie Shannon and Shelley Hull in "Under Orders."

## Fixing the Pace

By Heywood Brown

The author merely writes the play, but the producer fixes the tempo. Here he has almost the better part. If the timing is exactly suitable to the story in hand a play can hardly fail utterly, while the most brilliant bit of dramatic literature means little if it is played more than a beat or so too fast or too slow.

"Three Faces East" is a striking experiment in that it marks a traditional departure from a conventional theory of pace. The play is a melodrama from every angle of the story. It is filled with plots and counter plots and coincidences. Ninety-nine out of one hundred producers would set this melodrama at a pace limited only by the physical ability of the actors. The spies would dart back and forth and turn and wheel like submarine chasers. Intrigue would race.

Sam Forrest or George Cohan, or both, hit upon a better idea. They decided that they would compel the audience to take their spies seriously. Now, as a matter of fact, the secret agents of "Three Faces East" are not a bit better characterized than the spies of "The Man Who Stayed at Home," or "Friendly Enemies," or "Allegiance," or any one of a dozen recent plays which have dealt with plotters. And yet we found the Valdar of Emmett Corrigan a far more sinister figure than any of the others. His individual performance is better, to be sure, but more than that, he profits by the atmosphere of the play as a whole. A genuine quality of stealthiness has been created in "Three Faces East" by a conscious repression. Tension is held. The audience is made to wait for the dropping of the other shoe.

We do not contend that this slow pace necessarily makes for greater interest. For one thing, it sacrifices all humorous values. Most of the spy plays have been written in the spirit of larkly adventure. The playwright of this other school rather wanted people to laugh. He was willing to admit that his play was preposterous. "Three Faces East" is intended to make an entirely different appeal. It cannot meet laughter half way. There was some laughter on the first night, and it was distinctly harmful. During one scene the scheme of things was a bit flawed. Of a sudden, pace became rapid, and this disturbed the mood. This happened only once. For the rest, the play was held in check.

Unquestionably there is something in the theory. If an author does not care to risk the task of taking his audience by storm he may creep up through the grass and stalk it. A good many people will find that "Three Faces East" has captured their attention without their realizing the exact moment at which they began to get interested in the identity of the great Boelke and the fate of the British Cabinet.

Even if we did not enjoy the easy expedient of clipping things and pasting them up we would probably use at least a little of an article called "The Historical Play," from "The Villager," which we are going to quote presently. After commenting on the fact that the various plays about the war are not altogether satisfactory, the article goes on as follows:

"The historical play offers the way out. The historical play does no more in its effect than give us our own time in disguise, yet it is precisely the disguise which is its salvation. A gas mask can make us forget what the play is about, while a shield plays its minor part for us in the right proportion; yet the man who bears the shield, the soldier who is torn between his private interest and the interest of his country, who suffers and endures and lays down his life for his friend, who overcomes all manner of obstacles and concludes all manner of inspiring deeds—this is the same soldier who is fighting for us to-day under gas and star shell. The playwright translates the mechanical details of the nearest environment, but the things which matter he leaves in their coincidence. 'Horace' was among the first plays to be offered in Paris when the French theatre had scrambled to its feet after the shock of 1914, and the reason is not far to seek. Rome was the talk, but France was the thought; yesterday was the setting, but to-day was meant. 'Si vous n'etez Romain, soyez digne de l'etre!' How such lines must strike into the heart of the men and women whose foremost thought has become la patrie!

"It is a large factor in the aesthetic pleasure to translate the play before us into our own experience; it is a solace, too, especially in these trying times, to be reminded that other men and women in other ages have had to face the same decisions and endure much the same hardships as we to-day. The theatrical managers do not generalize overmuch in aesthetic theory, to be sure, but they are nevertheless sensing this particular opportunity which the war has offered and are groping to lay hold on it. There is talk, for example, of a play about Wellington—a play on some phase of the French Revolution. Our own Percy MacKaye projects a piece about George Washington. At the tail end of the London season a courageous manager tentatively offered an English version of Rovetta's 'Romantissimo,' which earlier had had a few special matinees in London in Italian. To the surprise even of the critics, who spontaneously praised it, this fiery bit from the history of Italy's national aspirations found, not of course, such popularity as 'Yes, Uncle!' but at least a gratifying and unexpected audience."

Some day we are going to see a farce in which a harassed character does not pause at the door just before his exit and exclaim: "You go to hell!"

The season is only a few weeks old, but already we are convinced that the Committee on Public Information is correct in saying that spies are everywhere.

Some time in May we plan to select our own particular all-America acting team for the season, but just now we have Sidney Drew and Emmett Corrigan slated for the ends.

Speaking of pace, we think that the proper tempo for picture acting should lie somewhere between the eternal restlessness of Douglas Fairbanks and the posturing of old Bill Hart.

By and by the topical film reviews will be back laying cornerstones in Hartford and gathering cocoa beans in Honduras, but just now nobody can achieve quite the same dramatic thrill as the camera man who turns the crank while American soldiers march through Paris.

Every dramatic critic, no matter how great his modesty, likes to see quotations from his reviews in the newspaper advertisements or on the ash-cans. It gives him confidence in his ability to turn an apt phrase. We are pleased to find that one little thing which we dashed off recently is being used. It reads: "Ten degrees cooler than the street."

**Battles Depicted in Fireworks**  
The most elaborate display of fireworks in years is promised by Schenck Brothers, managers of Palisades Park at that resort on Tuesday evening, August 20. A whole battlefront is depicted during a bombardment from air, land and naval forces. The battle is then carried to the trenches, and tanks will be shown creeping through No. Man's Land while artillery fire sets up a barrage.

**Luna Season in Full Swing**  
The midseason finds everything going merrily at Luna Park. All the attractions are going at full speed and to capacity. The war-time attractions are "Over There," a pictured description of the battlefield back of the lines in Picardy; "The Submarine Attack" and the Red Cross Theatre,



Ruth Findlay in "A Very Good Young Man"



Fannie Brice in "Why Worry"

## Frank Carter on Personality

By Harriette Underhill

Having interviewed Frank Carter on the subject of personality, we know no more about it than we did before. As soon as we saw him in the "Follies" the other night we determined to add him to our list of victims who are to be interviewed in regard to this gift of the gods, because we had an idea that he might know more about it than most people.

Of course every one recognizes personality when he sees it. It is that thing which enableth a man to entertain us while we say "He getteth away with murder, aye, verily."

If you have it, however, it won't matter whether you have any other talents or not. You may go and bury them, for you won't need them; and if you haven't it—well, you won't need your talents anyway, for you'll never get a chance to display them.

Lately we have been studying this personality thing a lot, and every time we spot any one who has it we immediately go and demand an interview, but up to the present time we have been able to unearth no facts which may be set down to aid the acquisitive. One reason we can't find out anything about it is because none of the persons who possess it seem to be aware of that fact.

Now, when we visited the "Follies" it was with the avowed intention of doing a "beauty story." We thought of interviewing the "peaches of 1918" and augmenting it with a few remarks by Lillian Lorraine; or possibly a few "hints on clothes" by the beautiful Dolores. And what happened? Why, we saw Frank Carter and were back again immediately on the personality quest. For here was personality plus. We recognized it as soon as he came out in the patent attorney's office and engaged Eddie Cantor as office boy.

And then in the next scene, where he sings "In Old Versailles," it was still more pronounced. Now, no one could accuse Mr. Carter of being a real singer. In fact, when you hear him sing you wonder why he doesn't dance. No other person would dare to chop their notes off at the end the way he does. He acts as though he just couldn't be annoyed sustaining them. However, we do not believe that any other person could "pin his medal on the girl he left behind" quite so effectively, although we agree with him that "She deserves it more than I." He doesn't deserve it at all—at least not for his singing. But do the deserving people of this earth ever get any medals pinned on them? They do not.

To think with us is to act, so we immediately called Mr. Carter on the telephone and asked him if he would like to be interviewed. He replied that he could think of nothing which would delight him more, and to obviate any danger of mistaken identity he would wear a carnation in his buttonhole and carry a Tribune folded in his right hand.

Now, all the things which we have said about Mr. Carter in the preceding paragraphs we have already said to him. We told him that we thought we didn't care very much for his voice but that we loved the way he sang, and we begged him to tell us how he did it. And we asked him if he knew that he played all his scenes as though he had just dropped in for the evening and considered it a jolly good lark?

"No," he said. "Tell me some more! You know, no one ever tells you the truth about yourself, and if they do tell you that you're rotten they never tell you why. But I don't need any one to tell me that I can't sing. I know it quite well."

How charming! No need to pursue the subject further, so we said: "Tell us, please, Mr. Carter, what is personality?"

"Personality? Why, you know, personality is that thing which enables people to get their stuff across without any effort."

But Mr. Carter was thinking in terms of the theatre only. "No, we don't mean what is personality, but must one be born with it? May one achieve it, or does one sometimes have it thrust upon him?"

## Vaudeville

**PALACE**—McIntyre and Heath for their second week present a new comedy entitled, "Back to the Livery Stable." Emma Carus, the singing comedienne, appears in new songs and frocks. Van and Schenck, the Watson Sisters and Jack Wyatt's Scotch Lads and Lassies are some of the features of an attractive bill.

**RIVERSIDE**—Mlle. Dazie in a lavishly staged revue of classic and modern dancing heads the bill. Regina Connell and Ruby Craven bring to vaudeville John Reed's little play, "Moon-down," which the Washington Square Players produced in their first season. Allan Rogers, tenor; Duffy and Inglis in their skit; "The Music Master" and Andy Tombs and Rena Parker are on the same bill.

**ROYAL**—Taylor Granville and Laura Pierpont, in the condensation of "An American Ace," are the feature of the bill. The supporting players include Paul Jozefvitch, violinist; Frank Orth and Anne Cody, Georgette and Capitola in "Clothes, Clothes, Clothes," and the DeWolfe Sisters.

**RUSHWICK**—Andy Byrne and Martha Russell divide top-line honors with Bert Kalmar and Jessie Brown. Andy Byrne presents an offering entitled "Types of Vaudeville," and Bert Kalmar and Jessie Brown offer a novelty called "Nursery Land." Others on the bill are Hines and Fox, the Ziegler Sisters, Elsie Williams and Company and Myrtle and Adelaide.

**LOEW'S AMERICAN**—"A Night in the Trenches," a musical war farce, is the featured act the first part of the week. Other acts will be Arthur Sullivan, in a comedy sketch; Nora Allan and George Russell.

## New Plays This Week

**MONDAY**—Arthur Hopkins will reopen his Plymouth Theatre with "A Very Good Young Man." The play is by Martin Brown, who before his retirement was a well-known musical comedy dancer. Mr. Hopkins describes it as "a comedy in three parties," since a unique social gathering provides the background for each act. The locale lies east of Third Avenue. Wallace Eddinger is the young man of the title. The assisting cast includes Ada Lewis, Ruth Findlay, Josephine Meyer, Alan Dingart and Frank Longacre.

"Yip, Yip, Yaphank!" the musical military revue, written and composed by Sergeant Irving Berlin and presented by 250 soldier boys from Camp Upton, will open at the Century Theatre for an engagement of six nights and two matinees. The object of the show is to raise a fund to establish a community house in Camp Upton.

**TUESDAY**—"He Didn't Want to Do It" is a musical play which is based on a farce of the same name by George Broadhurst that was produced several seasons ago. The book and lyrics of the piece are by Broadhurst and the music is by Silvio Hein. In the cast are Ernest Torrence, Percy Ames, Charles Meekam, Katherine Galloway, Helen Shipman, Adele Blood and what the press agent calls "an Adamless chorus."

A. H. Woods presents at the Eltinge Theatre "Under Orders," a new play of to-day in four acts by Berte Thomas. The scenes are laid in England and Germany. There are four characters in the piece, enacted by Shelley Hull and Effie Shannon.

**WEDNESDAY**—The second of the three plays which Mr. Woods presents this week is "Where Poppies Bloom," Marjorie Rambeau's new starring vehicle. The play, which is by Roi Cooper Megrue, is a drama of love in France.

**THURSDAY**—The large, inclusive word "Everything" is the title of this season's big show at the Hippodrome. As formerly the production is by R. H. Burnside. The music and lyrics this year are by Lieutenant John Philip Sousa, Sergeant Irving Berlin, John L. Golden, Percy Weirich, William Jerome, Raymond Hubbell and others. Among the principals are DeWolf Hopper, Houdini, Belle Stoney, Charles F. Aldrich, Bert Levy, "Bluch" the clown; Arthur Geary, Desires Lubvosika, Marion Saki and Gerda Gueda, with many featured entertainers.

**FRIDAY**—At the Harris Theatre A. H. Woods will present "Why Worry," a melodramatic farce, with songs by Montague Glass and Jules Eckert Goodman. Fannie Brice is the featured player. Associated with her are the Avon Comedy Four, of vaudeville fame; George Sidney, May Boley, Vera Gordon and others.

## Mitzi Tumbles Through "Head Over Heels"

On Thursday night, August 29, Henry W. Savage will present Mitzi, who will sing, dance, mimic and tumble through a new musical play, "Head Over Heels," suggested by Nalbro Bartley's story, "Shadows." The book and lyrics are by Edgar Allan Woolf, author of over one hundred successful vaudeville playlets. The music for "Head Over Heels" was composed by the prolific Jerome A. Kern.

The piece was staged by George Marion and the dancing numbers arranged by Julian Mitchell. The rôle assumed by Mitzi is that of a little Italian acrobat coming to New York with the Bambinetti troupe to play the music halls and falling "head over heels" into a romance which involves episodes of comedy and sentiment. Among the principals are Robert Emmett Keane, Charles Judels, Boyd Marshall, Edmund Gurney, Dorothy Mackay, Gertrude Dallas and a vast array of pretty girls.

## Gregory Kelly Comes Back to 'Seventeen'

On Monday night Gregory Kelly will resume the part of William Sylvanus Baxter in Booth Tarkington's "Seventeen" at the Booth Theatre. Mr. Kelly has been in Indianapolis for several weeks appearing in the plays produced by Stuart Walker during his repertory season there. Last week Mr. Kelly played the principal part in Stuart Walker's new play, "Jonathan Makes a Wish."

Miss Ruth Gordon continues as the baby talk lady and Lillian Ross as the ten-year-old sister of Willie.



PERRY AMES, HELEN SHIPMAN, ERNEST TORRENCE AND KATHERINE GALLOWAY IN "HE DIDN'T WANT TO DO IT."

## New Managers Open Fulton With "A Home-Made Hero"

The Fulton Theatre, which changes hands every little while, is now under the management of Oliver D. Bailey and Nathan D. Smith. The new lessees will open its season in the first week of September with "A Home-Made Hero," a war play which deals with the humorous phases of heroism. The title first chosen for the piece was "A Yellow Streak." The cast includes William Ingersoll, Ralph Koller, Ed Cahill, Evelyn Carter Carrington and Elmer Grandin.



IRVING BERLIN

## Open Air Entertainment At the Exposition

There will be added attractions to the open air entertainments at the New York International Exposition this week in the Jordan Sisters, who are artists, and the Maze troupe of acrobats. Miss Gertrude Van Denia, soprano; the Quinceys, high divers, and other favorites remain. Concerts by the 1st Field Artillery Band will be given twice daily, and during these days the great sea water surf swimming pool displays the "S. R. O." from early morning until late at night.