Amusement News and Stage Door Chat for the Playgoer

Everybody in "Irene" Is as Irish as Can Be, Boasts Its Composer

From the clay banks of Perth Amboy, N. J., to the effete enticements of London's famous Gaiety Theater is a big jump for any youth to make under any combination of circumstances, but when he does so via a route involving very active participation in the "Ziegfeld Follies," to say nothing of "Irene," right here at home—well, that youth deserves to have a book written about him by somebody like Arnold Bennett instead of by a mere matter-of-fact newspaper interviewer.

As to the youth in question, he is Harry Tierney, composer of the music of the Vanderbilt Theater production, whose "Alice Blue Gown," "Castle of Dreams" and "Skyrocket"—to mention only a few of the many song hits of "Irene"—are now being whistled and sung to the uttermost ends of the United States of America, with a strong probability of their circling the globe before peaches are red in New Jersey again. To bring about which devoutly wished-for consummation on the part of the London producers of the piece young Tierney sailed for the Gaiety Theater the other day to the accompaniment of his own music, "We're Getting Away With It," crashed out by the band of the good ship Nieuw Amsterdam.

But back to the clay banks of Perth Amboy and the tall, blue-eyed boy who mentioned them with a humorous twinkle as he stood on the pier after having bade goodby to several hundred of his fellow townsmen who had journeyed up in the cold gray dawn to thank him for putting their little community on the map.

"Sure, I was born there—right on the clay banks," he laughed. "Why is it, I wonder, that the mention of my birthplace always raises a laugh? To be born anywhere within the borders of New Jersey seems to be essentially humorous. The first time I was ever interviewed—which was shortly after 'My Baby's Arms' had been perpetrated for Mr. Ziegfeld's 'Follies of 1919,' the reporter officiating solemnly advised me, for the sake of my future, to select another and more highly sophisticated town, at least for the purposes of publicity. But, as you see, I'm standing pat. I not only still insist upon having been born in Perth Amboy, and of having received there most of my education, such as it is, but worse and more of it, I am living there yet, and in all probability shall live there for the rest of my natural life."

According to Tierney's story, he is indeed strictly "out of it." The house in Perth Amboy, the house in which he was born and where he lives with his father and mother and the rest of the family, stands on a quiet street. From one of the windows in the room where he wrote the score of "A Wee Bit of Lace" for "The Royal Vagabond," where he worked out, measure by measure, all the lilting tunes of "Miss Simplicity" and of "Irene"—from this window there is always to be seen a little vignette of the distant Atlantic and, in springtime, the blush of blossoming peach trees in the Tierney back yard.

"Why, I couldn't write a note of music if I couldn't look at that bit of sea when I have a mind to, and if I couldn't see those peach trees bloom at their appointed time. I am going to miss their blossoming this year, for under the terms of the contract with B. Sax and Sir Alfred Butt, the London producers of the piece, I've got to stay in England to direct the music rehearsals and supervise things generally until the thing is well established over there; but they tell me there's nothing to compare with the English peach trees I'll see this spring trained against the garden wall of the little house in St. John's Wood where I have rented a couple of rooms. I hope there's no frost in the south of England this spring.

"It is a curious coincidence that practically everybody associated with 'Irene' is of Irish extraction," remarked the young man. "There's James Montgomery, who wrote the play, which has an Irish girl for its heroine and a prima donna, Edith Day, who is half Irish. Montgomery is a Boston-born Irishman, and over in Dublin, you know, they say that the most Irish of all Irishmen are the Irish of Boston. Then there's Joe McCarthy, who wrote the lyrics for the piece. He's an Irishman two generations removed from County Clare.

"Walter Regan, the leading man, is an Irishman of American birth, and so is John B. Litel, the villain. Cavanaugh and Burckly are also good Celts, and as to the girls, principals and chorus, I believe every last mother's daughter of them has an Irish name. The Vanderbilt stage doorkeeper is an Irishman; so is the wardrobe mistress—I mean she's an Irishwoman. And to cap what you might call the Celtic climax, the Vanderbilt Theater is owned by the most Irish of Irishmen, Joseph Moran, who intrusts its management to that other most Irish of Irishmen, Lyle Andrews."

"How does a fellow go about it to write the music for a lyric?" There were ominous signs that the good ship would soon pull in her gang plank, but young Tierney was as cool as if a little thing like running over to supervise a big production in the historic Gaiety Theater was an everyday event.

"I don't know how other fellows do," was the reply, "but for myself I can only describe the initial process as mulling. Some songs require more of this mulling than others. Some songs fairly compose their own music. They have an inherent swing and melody in the words themselves and in the collocation of these words. While I have a song in the process of mulling I am very careful not to let any premature harmonies or melodies crystallize in my memory, as I frequently find them fatal when it comes to perfecting the score. I can only compare it to one's making an error in adding up a column of figures, which, if made once, one is likely to repeat over and over again. At least I do if I make an error in adding.

"The hardest thing in the world is to rid one's mind of a persistent tune, and when a composer gets a persistent tune into his head with the knowledge that it is not the tune he wants at all, well, he's in an awful fix until he can get rid of it. With myself, my most successful compositions have always been those which seemed to write themselves, and which were the result of long continued and almost unconscious mulling, if you know what I mean."

In the Pictures

Kathryn MacDonald

Briggs Shows What He Saw at "Abraham Lincoln"

Thomas E. Shea, Veteran of Stage, Says He Is Still Learning to Act

Thomas E. Shea is still learning to act and is very willing to learn. He said so in his dressing room at the Palace Theater the other day. Yet Mr. Shea is anything but a newcomer to the stage. He has played in many notable successes and is regarded as one of the country's most experienced tragedians. On the Keith circuit now he is giving excerpts from three of his most popular plays, "The Cardinal," "The Bells" and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

Somehow it seemed strange that this man did not talk religion. He was garbed in the traditional red robe and hat of the cardinal, and wore the ring of his rank. Flowing white locks and a trim Van Dyke completed the picture of the great Cardinal Richelieu. But he talked of audiences and of acting.

There is a noticeable difference between vaudeville audiences and audiences in legitimate houses, Mr. Shea, who has played many times before both, finds.

"Speed seems to be the essential requirement of the vaudeville patrons. They seem nervous, they want things to keep moving and are restless when the act drags. On the other hand, the audience in a legitimate theater is more patient. An actor must take his audience into account and speed up his performance when he feels that it is necessary.

"Personally I never have to see an audience. I can feel it. If I am not producing effects I can tell it instantly. But I can shut my eyes and know that the people out front are giving me their undivided attention. If they keep perfectly still, if there is no unnecessary coughing, if it is possible to even hear the actor sigh, then I am satisfied. Applause, of course, comes later, but it is hollow and means little if undivided attention and respect does not come first."

The Palace audience met all of the actor's requirements of what an audience should do. The lowest tone of his well modulated voice, the slightest sigh, could be heard easily in every part of the large theater.

Mr. Shea has not been very active in things dramatic in New York lately. He has been leading a very domestic life, he said, and when his wife opened the door to bring in some clothes Mr. Shea's wisdom was evident.

"But I never stop studying, on or off the stage," the actor said.

"What methods do you use to study acting?" Mr. Shea was asked.

"Observation mainly," he replied, "but there are ways to improve one's ability without even thinking of the stage. It is the same as in everything else. The greater range of knowledge, the deeper power of analysis, cannot help but enhance one's performance, whether he be a doctor, an engineer or an actor. Anything which develops reasoning or analytical power is valuable.

"Sometimes I study religions. Then I may study science. But I never stop studying and when I resume my stage work I find it much easier to grasp things, everything is much more facile, and I am sure I have added to my ability as an actor."

Incidents which occur in the audience and which are likely to mar a performance should be turned to the advantage of the actor, Mr. Shea believes.

"An actor should be able to turn all seemingly unpleasant occurrences to his own advantage by his own adaptability and pliability."

Thomas E. Shea

Every time he goes on the stage to act Mr. Shea feels he is going to give the very best performance of his career.

"I always strive to improve on my performances, whether it be with the aid of a light effect, a facial expression or some interesting business. Whenever a man comes to me with suggestions for bettering my act which seem clever and worth trying I am glad to listen to him. Although I have played 'The Bells' probably three thousand times I do not think that my performance is beyond suggestion. Only the other evening a man came to me and said that the excerpt I give would be much more effective if I cut out certain phrases and substituted others instead. I thought he was right, and did so."

Emotional Face Keeps Miss Lord From Playing Comedy Parts She Likes

Pauline Lord may not look like the happiest woman on earth, but she says she is really cheerful and does not take life too seriously. Since last Wednesday night, in delightful French-Canadian patois, she has been urging her pale-faced, consumptive husband to kill John St. John, the romantic woodsman in "Big Game," which is playing at the Fulton Theater.

She was not at all the cruel, outdoor-looking girl that she is on the stage when The Tribune's representative met her. It was the morning following the first night performance, and Miss Lord had arisen at an unheard of hour for an actress. She admitted that she attended an inevitable first night party after the show.

"Prohibition is a wonderful thing," she said, meaningly. "I never realized it more than I did last night and this morning."

"Those are almost traitorous words," Miss Lord was told.

"I know it," the actress replied, "but I mean them. It was not my first drink, of course (it was coming out), but I was so fagged by the strain of long rehearsing and the opening performance that the two cocktails went right to my head."

Miss Lord believes that the interview in which an actress talks interminably about her hobbies, about her ideas on Shakespeare and things that she has probably never heard of has been overdone. The interviewer agreed with her.

"I should love to play comedy parts because you know I really have a sense of humor, but it seems that my wishes hardly, if ever, are considered. It is always the emotional, sympathy-inspiring part for me.

"Perhaps it is because I look so morbid and in need of sympathy. But I am quite happy and do not take life a bit too seriously. Once I went to see a playwright about a play he was writing. He looked at me and said: 'Miss Lord, what is wrong? Is there anything I can do to help you?' I looked at him, surprised, and assured him that I was perfectly all right. We continued our conversation, but a few minutes later he stopped. 'There must be something troubling you,' he said to me with tears in his eyes. He offered me financial aid. He kept this up for so long that I felt tears coming into my own eyes.

"Every time I tell any one about little misfortunes I have had, however trifling they may have been, I am immediately flooded with sympathy. Maybe that is why I am given these parts. But I'd much rather have high comedy parts. Emotional acting is so much harder, I think, than comedy acting. Whenever I have an impressive emotional scene to do in a play I feel that it is awfully hard work to get any effects. Then, it is difficult for me to go away from the stage without carrying some of the emotion with me. It was so different in the few comedy parts I have had an opportunity to play. Then I find the work much easier and I came away from the theater refreshed."

The wistful-eyed California girl, who started her stage career in Nat Goodwin's repertoire company understudying Edna Goodrich, believes that the part and the play have much to do with the success an actress achieves. Some capable actresses strive very hard, but fall short because they never get the opportunity they need, while others reach stardom almost in a night. Actresses, knowing that they are not suited for the parts, often go into failure after failure. Usually they are influenced by the management and then they say to themselves:

"Well, they're putting a lot of money into this show. I might as well go into it and take my chances."

Thus they have weeks and weeks of rehearsals and not so many weeks of performances.

"I know my possibilities as an actress. I am not untrue to myself," Miss Lord says, wisely.

Some day, she does not know exactly when, Miss Lord plans to buy her own play and produce it. She does not intend to choose it without advice, but it will be chosen only if she feels that it has a part in it which suits her precisely. It is her ambition to play such a part, as she feels that she has not really had one yet, and then she will leave the stage.

"But all this may not happen until I am hobbling around on crutches," she said smilingly.

We hope so.

At the Strand

Constance Talmadge

Rachel Barton Butler, Author of Prize Play, Is Experienced Writer

If the amateur's betraying touches are missing from "Mamma's Affair," the Harvard prize play which opened at the Little Theater last week, it is because its author is by no means a novice at play writing. In Washington, Rachel Barton Butler was termed a sophomore, much to her amusement. In New York she was hailed as a playwright who showed dexterity in her first contact with the stage. As a matter of fact, she was trained for the theater, acted for two seasons and has been writing plays for the last ten years. She started out with the one-act play in Cincinnati, found it unsatisfying and turned to the four-act variety. For the last five years she has turned out a play each year. So that while her viewpoint is fresh, she has a technical knowledge of the stage.

Oddly enough, "Mamma's Affair" came within an ace of losing the Harvard prize. "Mom" was its rival, written by one "Edward Oliver Martin." It finally transpired that both plays were the work of Miss Butler. Winthrop Ames and Professor George P. Baker chose "Mamma's Affair" as the winner. Morosco had not read all the plays submitted at the time of their decision. When he came round to "Mom" he telephoned to the other two judges and said that a mistake had been made. The best play, he declared, was by "Edward Oliver Martin." Professor Baker, the only person in the secret, told him it was all right and that they were both done by Miss Butler. She had been playing off one against the other. So "Mom," which treats of the unselfish aspects of mother love, will in all probability be produced before long. Mr. Morosco has bought it.

Discussing the Freudian aspects of "Mamma's Affair," Miss Butler said she had always been interested in the mother and daughter theme and hoped some day to develop it pathologically. She had tried to make the play as humorous as possible, she said, so that it would miss being a tragedy. In real life this subject too often bordered on the revolting and morbid, she thought, and it had to be subtly treated on the stage.

"The condition of affairs I have pictured in this play is fairly common in New England and in places where there is a scarcity of men," declared Miss Butler. "I purposely make the mother in the play a widow. All the emotion that would naturally have been squandered on a man has been poured over her daughter and her friend. It is really inverted affection. There are so many women of the hypochondriac type who act in just this way, although they are never able to see themselves as others see them.

"Mother love is devouringly interesting to me because it is so complicated," continued Miss Butler. "I have found women of the calmest type before marriage developing the most insane mother love afterward. One never knows how a woman is going to take the reaction. If one had forced this play in the funnel of convention it would have been ruined. Miss Effie Shannon's delicate understanding of how the part should be played is just what I pictured for it when I was writing it."

It only took Miss Butler six weeks to write "Mamma's Affair." Play writing with her is a systematic business. She has worked all her life, and, instead of waiting for inspiration, goes right ahead according to prearranged schedule. She has always written to some extent. When she was cut off from the stage she determined that the only way to stick close to the theater was to write plays.

"I took Professor Baker's classes at Harvard in 1915-'16 and 1916-'17. They were wonderfully helpful. I think Professor Baker is misunderstood here. New York thinks that he is ambitiously trying to make playwrights. Nothing of the kind. No one knows better than he that playwrights cannot be made. He never forces suggestions on any one. He insists only that you think clearly and see your way right through to your final curtain before you begin work on your play. People are apt to think that a play down from Harvard must necessarily be 'highbrow' but I firmly believe there is a common meeting ground for the academic production and the typical Broadway audience. I don't believe in 'highbrow' plays personally. The greatest things in life can be treated in such a way that everyone will understand, provided they are handled ingeniously. It seems to me that the only thing to aim for is simplicity."

"And what are you going to do next?"

"Well, of course, after ten years' hard work and continuous faith in ultimate success one is naturally rather filled with elation that 'Mamma's Affair' has 'got across.' It is hard to say what I may do next. One's life changes one's work so much and new impressions have their inevitable reaction on one's work. I have a light farce in mind which I hope to do soon, largely for relaxation. I have five plays on hand now. Morosco bought two, and John D. Williams has a play of mine, with incidental music done by Victor Herbert. It is hard to pass judgment on one's own work, but I don't consider 'Mamma's Affair' the best thing I have done by any means."

Miss Butler's extreme amusement over being dubbed a sophomore was due to the fact that her play is decidedly sophisticated, and is the result of a study of hypochondriac and neurotic women. Knowing something about sophomores, she thought it rather funny that they should be expected to indulge in the psycho-analysis evident in her play. She intends to develop the theme further, and hopes it may have a salutary effect on mothers who are devouring their young daughters with an unnatural affection.

On the opening night she was standing in the lobby of the Little Theater, when a youth rushed up to her and said: "You're the author of this play, aren't you?"

"Yes, I am," said Miss Butler.

"Well, my mother's just like this. I'm going to bring her down to see it. It'll do her good."

She's a Goldwyn Star

Madge Kennedy

Clarence Sings a Paean Of Praise for Finland; Swears in Finnish, Too

Alfred Lunt, creator of "Clarence," seemed a bit tired the other night when he reached for his cosmetic jar and prepared to remove his war paint. First he and then his Japanese assistant, he said, had been ill—and then he nervously dropped a cuff link into the grease-paint pot. He also dropped an exclamation, one sounding like the bread course at Henri's.

"I beg your pardon," I said, "but would you mind repeating that?"

"Don't I look like a 'Red'?" he replied, reaching for the grease pot.

"Well, yes, until you remove some of that stuff from your face."

"Do you know what I'd like to do?" he continued, rubbing on the remover. "A number of pleasant midnight diversions within the romantic and financial means of a Broadway star were suggested, but he brushed them aside with a flirt of his towel.

"Don't tell the Department of Labor," he confided, rubbing up a good greasy lather, "but I'd like to have gone with Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman."

"To Finland! That's it!"

"Now, don't say 'Finland? My God! Tar and fish!' Why, I'd rather spend the winter in Finland than at Palm Beach."

Clearly this was a case for investigation; so he continued:

"You see, my parents were regular Americans, of New England descent, and all that, even if we do live near Victor Berger's district out in Wisconsin. But my stepfather is a native of Finland, and when I was seventeen we all went back to Finland for three years.

"Although then ruled by Russia, Finland was the sort of idyllic place you read about but seldom find. Instead of being a wild, frozen country, with half the people living like Esquimaux, I found it in many ways the equal of this country. I don't believe I ever saw a more wonderful hotel than that at Helsingfors, with splendid music and a great esplanade lined with trees overlooking the ocean.

"The country is wildly beautiful in a melancholy way. Like Minnesota and Wisconsin, where the immigrant Finns and Swedes all go, it is dotted with lakes, and its hills with pines, firs and birches. I seem to recall especially the evenings, with a sky of opal and the sound of melancholy folksongs floating across the lakes. In the winter you just travel around the country on top of the fences on skis, finding a red-roofed peasant's house now and then sticking out of the snow.

"Call that raving if you want to, but it's a wonderful country. We lived on my stepfather's country estate and mixed freely with the natives. This rather scandalized our immediate friends, but I found the Finnish peasants very likable, though a little stolid, stolid.

"I learned enough Swedish in three months to get around easily, and spent many a day in Viborg, where Emma Goldman and Berkman landed. They could easily find a much worse place to stay.

"During the summer months there would be outdoor parties accompanied by amateur theatricals. I took part in many of these, always given in Swedish, of course. We gave 'Pillars of Society,' several Swedish plays and a number of one-act playlets of Finnish and Russian composition. The Finnish plays were so good I am now trying to secure some for use in this country.

"However, the Finns as actors were a little inclined to take things too seriously because of years of Russian oppression. I recall one day how my father's brother acted after the Russians decreed that Russian textbooks should be used in all the schools. He swore a terrible Swedish oath and, taking out a dagger, dramatically pinned a Russian book to the schoolroom desk.

"Since the war, however, Finland has become a republic dominated largely by Socialist and 'Red' elements. The story is told that the composer Sibelius was seized by the 'Reds' and was about to be shot when it was found he was a musician. The leader of the 'Reds,' happening to be fond of the trombone, spared his life!

"I guess Finland is a little bit gone to the dogs now, for they've just got prohibition, too. I suppose if I went back I'd do nothing but mourn about the good old days. And those certainly were!

"If you have seen and heard Clarence you will have noted, perhaps, at times a peculiar twang to his voice and an odd note now and then in his pronunciation. Thinking of this, I reminded him as I left of the odd ejaculation with which he had opened our interview. He laughed.

"Whenever I get excited," he said, "I unconsciously develop a Finnish-Swedish accent, and when I swear Finnish-Swedish comes more naturally than English."

Just a Free-for-All, Friendly Chat Among Theater Parisien Folk

There is a measure of realism about the production of "Le Poilu" at the Théâtre Parisien. The cast is picked from the foremost theaters in Paris. Most of the men fought in the war. One of them was a prisoner in Germany for two years. They are all reluctant to talk about "la guerre." Their medals they try to conceal from the inquiring.

"My medals?" echoed Felix Barré, when interviewed as he finished a rehearsal of this week's play. "One does not wish to talk about those things. They are for one's children. The war checked the production of plays in France, of course, because the writers and actors were soldiers, but the public has lost none of its enthusiasm for playgoing. The theater has really helped to keep alive the scintillating spirit of the Parisian public during those years of darkness. For that they love it more than ever. But they will have none of the war. They do not want to be reminded of what they have gone through when they spend an evening in the theater.

"In France we look for a great creative period in the drama when we have had time to readjust ourselves. Such suffering as we have had must be followed by the creative impulse. There are no signs yet—but we are waiting."

M. Barré played at Rejane's Theater in Paris for seven years and at the Imperial Theater, Petrograd. When war broke out he enlisted, although over the age limit, and fought for thirty-six months. His period of soldiering ended when he was wounded.

Lucien Weber, who is stage director of the Parisien troupe of players, had charge of the first American ambulance train in the French army. It is he who plays the part of le poilu in the play of that name at the Theatre Parisien. He was born in Alsace and, when quite a little chap, his father, brother and he moved into France to get away from the German influence. It was he who started the Parisian magazine, "Femina," and he owns the theater of the same name that is run in conjunction with the paper. One of his innovations was the training of an all-children cast to put on pantomimes in Paris. In addition, he produced the classics—the plays of Molière, Beaumarchais and others of the same kind.

It was carefully explained by each member of the cast that no one "étoile" was any brighter than the other. In short, it is an all-star stock company. Playing some of the feminine roles is the charming little brown-eyed goddaughter of Sarah Bernhardt.

"I was born to the stage," she explained in hesitating but correct English. "My father now plays in the Bernhardt Theater in Paris, and my uncle, Breton Caubet, was a great tenor singer in the opera. Sarah Bernhardt became interested in me when I was quite a little thing, and I have played many ingenue parts with her. It was a wonderful opportunity to be able to work under her. I am in pictures, too, and was the ingénue in 'Mothers of France.' I want to stay here now. I believe there is a greater dramatic field in America than in France. I should really like to go into musical comedy, for I sing and dance."

Lucienne Debrennes, a vivacious brunette, whose French was too tumultuous to be followed easily, gave a brief and snappy interview which, translated literally, was as follows:

"I love New York and its inhabitants. I am learning English at the Berlitz School, and in three months' time, if you come to see me, I will give you all my thoughts in the language of Shakespeare."

Mlle. Henriette Delaunoy thinks it strange that actors and actresses should slide into their parts as easily as they appear to do on the American stage. Her conception of theatrical work is years of training by men and women of education.

"Your spectacles here are quite wonderful, I think," she declared. "Your stage scenery, your costumes, your trappings are marvelous, but I do not think your acting is as finished or as spirituelle as on the Parisian stage. Here it seems that a man is picked because he happens to look the part. We do not care so much about looks if the man has the ability, education and culture necessary to play the part well. It takes us three years to rehearse for a classic production, while you—how long shall I say you take? If your American actors worked as hard and studied as much as we do, they would be better than French actors, because they take to the stage so easily and naturally."

Mme. Lili Rite, who has played all manner of comedy roles, has specialized in mother parts. During the war she was mobilized for work in the hospitals and camps. Before then she was attached to the Théâtre National, where she played light comedy roles.

"I think it is criminal now to speak of the war," said André Franky, the young actor who spent two years as a prisoner of war in Germany. "We want to forget about it—never to speak of it."

Franky is a Belgian, and he was taken prisoner on the Yser in 1915. In the happy-go-lucky days before the Germans invaded his country he played in the Casino de Paris, the Apollo and the Folies Bergères. He has learned to speak quite passable English in two months' time.

Another of the war heroes in the cast is Robert Casadesus, who is artistic director of the troupe. He was previously artistic director of La Scala, Paris. He has done something of everything on the stage—played comedy and tragedy, sung in opera and put on a vaudeville act. He was at Verdun for a year and, when his health gave out, he played in the army theaters.

American Resents Bard's Slurring of Our Help In Winning the War

Dramatic Editor, New York Tribune.

Sir: The following speech was in response to applause tendered Mr. Wilkie Bard, English comedian, at the evening performance, January 19, 1920, at Shea's Theater, Toronto, Canada:

"This is my fourteenth week in America, and nowhere have I received such a welcome as in Toronto. (Applause.) I know by this that there is a British feeling in this audience.

"I was at a Masonic meeting in Cleveland, and after hearing Americans talk regarding the war, the president called on me and gave me five minutes in which to talk. I told him I only wanted five words: 'The Allies won the war.'

"We British started the war and, like a boxing contest of ten rounds, after nine rounds a fresh contestant steps in. You can readily see who won the war. I could have won myself in the tenth round."

As a true American I am inclosing this to show you how some great actors appreciate American hospitality. Your American friend,

ERNEST W. MAUGHLIN.

Brandon Tynan, a True Romanticist, Loves to Play in Romantic Drama

Perhaps it is because he is Irish; perhaps it is a certain dash that he has on the stage; at any rate we seem to associate romance with Brandon Tynan, now appearing as Brisquet in "The Purple Mask," at the Booth.

"Romantic?" he echoed. "Well, I admit to it, but it is so much easier to be a thing than to talk about it. Now, there, don't smile; it is an absolute truth. All right, just fall in love and tell your friends about it, or try to justify it to the relatives of the loved one—you will see that what I say is true.

"Romantic drama, as I take it, is the drama we do not understand. It is the drama of dreams versus the drama of reality. It is the drama of youth, the drama of inspiration. After all, heaven is simply the fulfillment of the romantic drama, for what is it but the perpanent romantic dream?

"The romantic drama is the drama that took this war out of the sordid struggle and gave to it the wonderful idea and ideal to make the world safe for democracy. It was the self-determination of all little peoples to live their lives in love and liberty such as we know at home. It was this romantic touch to the tragic drama that made our enemies stop, stunned, to roll back the stone of oppression from the sepulchre of tyranny. Indeed, if the settlement of it had had a tendency into the sordid and greedy we would have failed, but with these beauties in view it should be simple to the utmost."

"What about the romance of the individua?" we asked Mr. Tynan. "Take, for example, your own work and life; it seems to have had more than the average amount of color."

"You are persistent," replied Mr. Tynan. "I guess I'll have to submit. I was born in Ireland—that is romantic enough. When I was very young we moved to this country, and settling in New York, took up our residence on Washington Heights. At that period of my life baseball was the most romantic thing I could think about. No, I was not an intellectual child—can't even say I was unusually intelligent.

"My initial professional experience was in the Lyceum Stock Company. Romantic drama was then in vogue; the public wanted plays like 'The Prisoner of Zenda' and 'When Knighthood Was in Flower.' I first appeared with this organization in 'Mayflower,' a play from the pen of Louis N. Parker, who, strangely enough, wrote 'Joseph and His Brethren.' In 'Mayflower' I was an Irish boy, and a young Chicago critic, who is now your dramatic editor, was kind enough to notice me in his review.

"The Lyceum Stock Company proved to be a fine experience. Some of the best actors of the day were members and I learned a great deal from watching their work. It was just the right atmosphere for a susceptible boy. While in it I decided to write a play. In fact, I thought I had a great secret that I had discovered the character of Robert Emmet. Later I awakened to the fact that the Irish idealist had inspired Pinero, Boucicault, and others much older and wiser than I. Perhaps this is the very secret of the success of my 'Robert Emmet.' They were sophisticated and wrote from the angle of the theater; my heart was my inkwell. I can remember the surprise of a friend of mine when I told him I had disposed of the play. 'Well,' he said, 'you don't know the English language; you don't know the technique of the drama; you are too inexperienced in life to know characterization, but you did have enough sense to sell it.'

"I guess it is often a matter of luck and fate, and my fate next brought me to Ibsen and finally to his 'Eyolf.' You see, Ibsen, having completed his circle, once more went to the romantic in 'Eyolf.' In his earlier play, 'A Doll's House,' he has Norah say, 'Before all I am a human being,' and again, 'I don't know what religion is.' In 'Eyolf' he says: 'Only so far as you think of others will you know happiness,' and 'Look to the peaks of the stars for the great silence.'

"From Ibsen I went to 'Joseph and His Brethren.' That certainly had a romantic atmosphere. No one could be more idealistic than young Joseph, with his coat of many colors. He was a dreamer and was touched by nothing sordid. In the revival of 'Trilby,' as Little Billee I was in the articulate romantic. 'The Melody of Youth' took me back to Ireland. In it I had woven the story of a Dublin coquette and a young divinity student.

"'Pendennis' took me into an English atmosphere and perhaps I was not as much at home in the philanderings of Arthur Pendennis. I left his affairs of the heart for an ill titled play—'Success.' In it I played the part of an actor who, as a young man, had been a successful 'Lear' and then had lost his grip on everything. In his embittered old age he recovers his dreams in the romance of his daughter."