Interesting Chat and Stage Gossip for Playgoers

Juliette Day in "We Girls" © STRAUSS-DEYTON

Bessie Barriscale in "The Skirt" IRA D. SCHWARZ

Billie Burke in "The Intimate Strangers" ALFRED CHENEY JOHNSTON

Helen Freeman in "The Great Way" IRA L. HILL'S STUDIO

Margalo Gillmore in "The Straw" CAMPBELL STUDIOS

Conway Tearle in "The Mad Dog" CAMPBELL

Ed. Wynn in "The Perfect Fool" MOFFETT

Mrs. Leslie Carter in "The Circle" WHITE STUDIO; in "Zaza"; in "DuBarry"; in "Adrea"

Atwill as "The Grand Duke" Molds Futures as He Will

Never Despotic but Always Diplomatic, the Star of Sacha Guitry's Comedy Arranges Everything for Everybody

By Harriette Underhill

"Oh, ever thus from childhood's hour
I've seen my fondest hopes decay;
I never loved a tree or flower
But 'twas the first to fade away."

And so, after waiting for years to write our impressions of Lionel Atwill, and perhaps make an impression in the doing thereof, we were hustled in and out of that very attractive gentleman's dressing room between the first and second acts of "The Grand Duke." And who, I ask you, could make an impression, let alone extract an interview, in five minutes? But, to again resort to the poetic writings of another, "Ah, well, for us all some sweet hope lies," and Mr. Atwill may expect to be interviewed by us at least once in a season so long as he remains on the stage.

"The Grand Duke" is one of those plays in which Leo Dietrichstein used to revel. The hero is a clever, fascinating, bored man of middle age who marries off everybody in the play and then sits back and mixes his lonely salad dressing with a satisfied chuckle. It looked for a few moments in the second act as though Mlle. Martinet, who had no more claim on him than that she happened to be the mother of his twenty-year-old son, was going to entangle the Grand Duke Feodor Michaelovitch in the chains of matrimony, but he remembered just in time to save the play from having a really happy ending. And who ever heard of a smart play with a happy ending? Perish the thought!

Woman Proposes, But That Is All

We had it all figured out that, at the end of the play, we should go back stage and talk to Mr. Atwill at length, and we intended to ask his opinion of Mayor Hylan, of the milk strike, of the film censorship, of the employment problem, of Christian Science and spiritism and a few other subjects which interest us, and all we found time to do was to tell him that we never should have known him in that make-up and to ask him if he liked his part. "It is a good make-up, isn't it?" said Mr. Atwill as he glanced in the mirror. "When we were out on the road one woman went to the box office and demanded her money back because she said she came to see Lionel Atwill and had seen an understudy play the part. 'Nonsense,' she replied when they assured her that I had played the Grand Duke that afternoon. 'I think I know Mr. Atwill. Why, I've known him for years!'" So it is not surprising that we did not know him. In the first place, he wears a wig and a false forehead which makes him appear slightly bald and a little taller. Then he wears his chest padded, so that he appears to be a much bigger man than he is and very Russian. A small mustache completes the disguise, for we do not believe that Mr. Atwill uses any face putty in effecting the change, although some one told us that he did so. At any rate, we were very close to him, and we could not detect the use of any.

Tells the Fortune of the Grand Duke

"I find the rôle a fascinating one—for a change," said Mr. Atwill in answer to our question. "But, of course, I shouldn't care to play middle-aged noblemen all the rest of my life. Mr. Belasco has told me that he is going to choose widely different characters for me to play each season, so the future promises to be busy and interesting."

"Didn't you love 'Deburau?'"

"Better than anything I ever did."

And then we asked Mr. Atwill to play our favorite game with us—plotting futures for the people in the show. "What do you think happened to the Grand Duke Feodor Michaelovitch after he got all the other people married off? Do you think he remained a lonely, contented bachelor to the end of his days?"

"No, indeed; he was married by some lady who was cleverer than any he had previously met." "But, you know, he believes in the law of natural selection. Don't you remember what he said to Mlle. Vermillion when she asked his advice about her marriage? He said: 'If the Garden of Eden had been full of men Eve would still have offered the apple to Adam.' And, later, he said: 'To be happy you must marry the man you love or love the man you marry.'"

"Yes, and you remember, too, that he says: 'I never think what I feel nor feel what I think.' So you can't tell about him."

Belasco Chimes Hasten Departure

Here those soft, mysterious chimes which were introduced as curtain-raisers by the great Belasco when he built the Stuyvesant Theater sounded and we rose to go. "We have plenty of time. I do not go on for five minutes yet." "You may have plenty of time, but I have not," we replied, "for I wouldn't miss any of that next act for worlds," and we rushed away, but even at that the curtain was up when we found our way to H row and we are sure that all of the seven people whom we crowded past on our way back to our seat hated us. All excepting the nice young man at our left, and he heaped coals of fire on our head by capturing an usher and getting us a glass of water, and we retaliated by showing him the beautiful photograph of Mr. Atwill in character which he gave us. In spite of the fact that the star quite came up to our expectations, the evening held one disillusionment for us. The beautiful chimes do not emanate from the dome, but are pounded out by a man in shirt sleeves in the wings.

Stage Gossip

HAVING found a home for O'Neill's "Anna Christie," featuring Pauline Lord, at the Vanderbilt Theater, Arthur Hopkins will now turn his directive energies to the rehearsals of "The Idle Inn," Peretz Hirshbein's play, which will serve Ben-Ami as a vehicle for his second appearance in English. The cast of the production is now being assembled and the rehearsals will start in a day or two. Ben-Ami has put in many profitable hours since he finished his season in "Samson and Delilah," and scarcely a trace of accent will be found in his delivery when he again appears on the English-speaking stage.

Zoe Akins's second play of the season, "The Varying Shore," will probably be brought into the Hudson Theater within the next month. Elsie Ferguson, who will star in the latest opus of the author of "Daddy's Gone A-Hunting" is rehearsing now, and she will take to the outlying districts for experimental work in preparation for the New York premiere. "The Six-Fifty" may remain at the Hudson until "The Varying Shore" is ready to make its bow here.

The much discussed Hopwood comedy, "The Demi-Virgin," will pack up her California motion picture atmosphere to-morrow night and change her address from the Times Square Theater to the Eltinge Theater. "A Bill of Divorcement" will leave George M. Cohan Theater and fill the void left by "The Demi-Virgin" at the Times Square Theater.

The New Plays

(Continued from page one)

of J. L. Caragiale, English text by Simeon H. Klafter, and "The Pot Boiler," a satire, by Alice Gerstenberg, compose the first bill of the season which will run for the week. "The Eternal Judith" is from the repertory of the Bucharest National Theater, and is said to be the first Rumanian one-act play ever presented in this country.

A novelty new to America, "A Polish Wedding," will be the ballet feature of the program at to-morrow night's performance of Anna Pavlowa and her Ballet Russe. This will be the second and last week of the dancer's engagement at the Manhattan Opera House. She will also revive "The Fairy Doll." Because of the Election Day matinee, the Wednesday afternoon performance will be eliminated.

Another screen favorite will again take up a place behind the footlights when Conway Tearle will be seen at the Comedy Theater, Tuesday night, in George Scarborough's "The Mad Dog." Advance information concerning the drama is decidedly meager. The Shuberts, who are producing it, say that it centers about a young girl brought up under the tutelage of an old priest in a Texas mission.

Mary Young and Juliette Day will be featured in "We Girls," a comedy by Frederic and Fanny Hatton, which Marc Klaw, Inc., will produce Wednesday evening at the Forty-eighth Street Theater. The latest work by the authors of "Upstairs and Down," "The Great Lover," "Lombardi, Ltd.," and "Years of Discretion" is called a frolicsome comedy with a touch of satire on psycho-analysis and sex psychology.

The Evolution of a Star

Mrs. Leslie Carter

A name in incandescent lights over the portals of a theater usually means many previous years of small parts and much of personal sacrifice and struggle. To this rule Mrs. Leslie Carter is the outstanding exception. As far as the public is concerned she began her dramatic career as a star. Her name has been incandescent in front of every theater in which Mrs. Carter has ever played for the last twenty-five years. Until her appearance under the Selwyn management in "The Circle" it has stood alone, for throughout the years of Mrs. Carter's long association with David Belasco she held the center of every stage—the sole star of every production in which she appeared under his management.

Mrs. Leslie Carter, however, did not win her place in the theater without hard work. Her evolution as a star took place under the private tutelage of Mr. Belasco rather than in the public eye. But through it all she worked unceasingly to fulfill herself as she had believed she might do from her earliest youth. A Kentuckian by birth, she was brought up under the old time Southern prejudice against any business or professional activity for a woman, but after her marriage to Leslie Carter, of Chicago, and her subsequent divorce, she made up her mind that she would make her own place in the world. Because the theater was the thing she loved above all other things Mrs. Carter determined to go to David Belasco and ask for the opportunity to prove herself.

Thus began the association between Mrs. Leslie Carter and David Belasco, which lasted through eighteen years of brilliant success. Under his tutelage she studied many, many parts. The public never saw her interpretation of them, but she worked none the less for that. Of course, it was hard to wait and work through several years before she tried her wings on Broadway, and harder still when at last the great hour came and "The Ugly Duckling," in which she played the principal rôle, proved a failure. It was shortly withdrawn, and Mrs. Carter was presented once more in a musical piece called "Miss Helyett," in which she acquitted herself with such credit that Mr. Belasco determined to write a play to more adequately fit her talents. That play was "The Heart of Maryland," in which Mrs. Carter starred for three seasons in this country and afterward in London.

At the close of her London season in "The Heart of Maryland" Mrs. Carter returned to the United States to create the title role of "Zaza." "Zaza" had its première in Washington, on December 26, 1898, coming into the Garrick Theater, New York, January 9, 1899.

"Du Barry" followed and likewise had its out-of-town première in Washington, coming subsequently to the Criterion Theater, this city. After one season in "Du Barry" and another alternating between "Du Barry" and "Zaza" Mrs. Carter appeared in "Andrea" at the Belasco Theater, which she played until the spring of 1906, when she severed her long association with Mr. Belasco.

Subsequently Mrs. Carter appeared under the management of Charles Dillingham in a repertory of her most successful plays, after which she became her own manager, appearing in "Kassa," a play by John Luther Long, following which John Cort starred her in "Two Women" at the Lyric Theater, this city, and later presented her again in a repertory of her most successful plays.

Feeling much the need of a rest after so many years of stardom—particularly for her eyes, which had suffered seriously from the footlights—Mrs. Carter bought a villa in France about seven years ago, intending to remain there in the peace and quiet of retirement for a couple of years, but these two years lengthened into seven when, last summer, Arch Selwyn went to London and saw "The Circle." It seemed to Mr. Selwyn that the part of Lady Kitty had been written for Mrs. Carter. So the first thing he did was to secure the American rights to the play. Then he went off to Paris and engaged the star.

At the Columbia

"Town Scandals," in two acts and seven scenes, one of the advanced types of burlesque productions, will be the week's attraction. The production contains comedy bits, vaudeville specialties and a variety of dancing and musical numbers.

Open Door Draws English Actors to U. S., Says Pollock

Star of "A Bill of Divorcement" Didn't Even Carry a Tray in London, So He Came to America, Liked It and Thinks He Will Stay

Allan Pollock, star of "A Bill of Divorcement," one of the season's few outstanding successes, came to the conclusion some years back that if he ever intended to amount to anything as an actor it would be up to him to leave his native England and take a fling at the drama in the vicinity of Broadway and Forty-second Street, New York City, U. S. A.

He had toured and toured in England; he knew the provinces and the provinces knew him, but the London stage had been denied him. As he expresses it, he couldn't "even carry a tray on the London boards." It was up to Mr. Pollock to try his luck elsewhere, so he packed his luggage for a trip to New York. He has never regretted it.

He knows the reason why so many English players have come to this country, and why so many have stayed here after their arrival. "The open door policy exists in the American theater," said Mr. Pollock. "It isn't to be found in London. Because of this fact many players who might have become stars of the British stage are now conspicuous figures in the theater of this country. And I am convinced that the acting of English players now in New York is of a higher grade than that furnished by the theatrical favorites of London."

Mr. Pollock has found the rôle of Hilary Fairfield the most interesting thing he has had an opportunity to do since he became a Broadway figure as Dallas Brown in the unforgettable Hopwood-Rinehart "Seven Days."

"The part of the father in this new play," he said, "is certainly an unconventional part, a part that should be made intensely dramatic but not in the least bit theatrical, if such can be avoided." While the actor would not say definitely whether his war experience helped him in his characterization, he did make the significant statement that he could not have played the part seven years ago.

Mr. Pollock doesn't feel that he owes anything to the London stage, but he is grateful to the provinces. As a youth he had a singing voice, and appeared in numerous musical comedies. At nineteen he tackled some sturdy Irish dramas—the dramas of Dion Boucicault. These included "The Shaughraun," "The Colleen Bawn" and "Arrah na Pogue."

These took the actor on tours that extended to the far corners of Ireland, to many remote hamlets and before many strange audiences.

He later got real ambitious and decided that he'd try his hand at Shakespeare and various modern plays. Nobody seemed to offer any objections and Allan Pollock began building up a repertoire. He became leading man for Edward Terry and appeared in some of the early pieces of Arthur W. Pinero and received the record-breaking salary of his career—£6 a week.

It wasn't so long after that that he made the big decision, came to America, liked it and stayed. London wouldn't even let him carry a tray, but in New York his name in big lettering blazes forth nightly in front of the playhouse named for the location, the Times Square.

New Theatrical Offerings

MONDAY—At the Greenwich Village Theater George C. Tyler will offer "The Straw," by Eugene O'Neill. The cast: Margale Gillmore, John Westley, Harry Harwood, George Woodward, Robert Strange, George Farren, Grace Henderson, Alice John, Nora O'Brien, Jennie Lamont, Alice Haynes, Viola Cecil Ormonde, Richard Ross, Norris Millington.

At Henry Miller's Theater A. L. Erlanger, Charles Dillingham and Flo Ziegfeld jr. will present Billie Burke in "The Intimate Strangers," a comedy by Booth Tarkington. The supporting cast: Alfred Lunt, Glenn Hunter, Frances Howard, Elizabeth Patterson, Clare Weldon, Charles Abbe and Frank Kirk.

At the Park Theater "The Great Way," an adaptation by Horace Fish and Helen Freeman from a novel by Mr. Fish, will be offered. The cast: Helen Freeman, Charlotte Granville, Martha Messinger, Beatrice Wood, Marian Marcus Clerie, Lois Arnold, Eva Benton, Duval Dalzell, Moroni Olsen, H. Ellis Reed, Reginald Pole, Juan de la Cruz and Elfin Finn.

At the Cohan Theater A. L. Erlanger will present Ed. Wynn in "The Perfect Fool," a musical comedy. The supporting cast: Janet Velie, Fred Ardath, True Rice, Guy Robertson, Johnny Dale, Flo Newton, Irene Mayberry, Aline McGill, Estelle Penning and others.

At the Bijou Theater Richard Herndon will present Bessie Barriscale in "The Skirt," a farce by Howard Hickman. The supporting cast: Paul Harvey, Howard Hickman, Vincent Dennis, Irving Brooks, F. J. Woods, William Friend, Leo Curley, Phil Bishop, Harry Buchanan, Louis Hendricks, Frank Fanning, Ruth Hammond and Merle Stanton.

At the Princess Theater the East-West Players will offer a bill of four one-act plays—"Autumn Fires," a comedy from the Danish of Gustav Wied, done into English by Benjamin F. Glazer; "Sweet and Twenty," a comedy by Floyd Dell; "The Eternal Judith," a drama from the Rumanian of J. L. Caragiale done into English by Simeon H. Klafter, and "The Pot Boiler," a satire by Alice Gerstenberg. The cast: Maurice Cass, Jane Manners, Gustav Blum, Miriam Macaulay, Allen Nagle, S. Robert Wyckoff, Roy Bucklee, Henry B. Forbes, A. L. Ridge, Ernest Freeman, Warren M. Burnett, Irving H. Rapper, Maurice Burke, Evelyn Toupin, Syn Elin and Jane Bricker.

TUESDAY—At the Comedy Theater the Shuberts will present Conway Tearle in "The Mad Dog," a drama by George Scarborough. The supporting cast: Helen Menken, Forrest Robinson, Raymond Van Sickle, William Harcourt, Margaret Knight and Charles Kraus.

WEDNESDAY—At the Forty-eighth Street Theater Marc Klaw will offer "We Girls," a comedy by Frederick and Fannie Hatton. The cast: Mary Young, Juliette Day, Edward Fielding, Marguerite Forrest, Eleanor Parker, Warren Kretch, Mina Phillips, John McFarlane, Ray Wilson, A. J. Herbert, Maida Reade, William Lennox and Thomas Rolfe.