# Interesting Chat and Information for the Playgoer

## So It Is True That All the World's a Stage

### They Come From Far and Near When Mr. Golden Calls for Amateur Actors

Miss Helen Jenkins ought really to understudy Miss Helen Menken, not only because of the similarity in the names, but because she is so much like her. And surely it isn't safe to go a single performance without an understudy for Miss Menken, for at every performance of "The Seventh Heaven" there is not a soul in the theater who is not entirely convinced that in one second Diane is going to hurl herself from the attic window to follow Chico to war under the tricolor. Some night she will do so, and then an understudy will be necessary.

When we explained this to Madge Kennedy she replied: "But I want her to understudy me in 'Spite Corner.' I had her all picked out."

"No," we insisted, "she must understudy Miss Menken, and you may have her friend, Frances Judson." So Miss Kennedy agreed, and it would all have been settled then and there if it hadn't been for John Golden. It was his party, although he admitted that he had expected about twenty, and when we left the theater at 3 o'clock there were five hundred and more coming across the horizon. So many people want to change what they are doing and become actors or actresses! And Mr. Golden should have realized this when he let it be known that he was the friend of the inexperienced and would supply his companies with understudies from the ranks of the amateurs. All you had to do was give a trial reading, be assigned to a company, take the script, learn your part and become a full-fledged understudy. But Mr. Golden had not realized that such news spreads as fast as though it were sent in a chain letter until two or four hundred people hurled themselves at him Thursday afternoon at 1 o'clock on the stage of the Little Theater with the eager question, "Mr. Golden, do you think I have a chance?"

The two misses whom we mentioned in the first part of the story were the prettiest girls there. They took our eye immediately, and when Miss Kennedy spoke to them she was so impressed that she immediately arranged to hear them herself. Both girls have beauty, beautifully modulated voices and such experience as they gained in being connected with "Zero."

"Aren't they sweet and pretty and young?" said Miss Kennedy, tenderly, as she gazed over the hundreds of assembled women, ranging all the way from flappers to the "dangerous age." "I'm bound that every one here shall have a chance, if it is only to say 'Tea is served,' or, 'Milord, the carriage awaits.'"

There were not nearly so many men as girls, though there were plenty of them to make the scene interesting. It had been Mr. Golden's idea that he and Miss Kennedy and a few other hand-picked judges should hear the contestants read something from Shakespeare, or Frank Craven, or Austin Strong, and that the most likely of these should be chosen for the parts; but when half a thousand people knocked at his stage door there was nothing to do but ask them to stand in line and deliver their names and addresses. It was our idea that all the girls with large ankles and all the men with marcel waves be eliminated, and that would greatly have amplified matters; but no one else could see it that way. Miss Kennedy insisted right up to the hour of our departure that each and every one should have his or her chance, though that will take at least a week of eight-hour days.

Austin Strong, who wrote "The Seventh Heaven," was on hand, but he wasn't of any use to any one, because all he could do was to pace up and down the stage with a "part" in his hand. He said he was frightened to death, and he looked it.

"Are you one of the contestants?" we asked with what we intended to be biting sarcasm. But he replied, "In a way, yes. The old cabman fell ill in 'The Seventh Heaven' and I have to take his place. I haven't seen these lines since I wrote them and I shall probably be hissed off the stage tonight," which only goes to prove that Mr. Golden has indeed a crying need of understudies. H. U.

## The Playbill

(Continued from page one)

"Lies," and "The End of the Book," by HENRY MYERS, will be on the same program. . . .

"Thin Ice," the Percival Knight comedy, in which Mr. Knight plays the leading part, will move from the Comedy to the Belmont Theater to-morrow night.

"Molly Darling" goes from the Liberty Theater to the Globe Theater tomorrow night. "The Bunch and Judy" will come up from the Garrick Theater, Philadelphia, to the Globe on Monday night, November 20. "Molly Darling" will start its road tour on the same night at the Garrick, in Philadelphia.

An entertainment committee, composed of Mrs. Douglas Monroe Robinson, Mary Hoyt Wiborg, Mrs. J. B. Thomas, Mrs. J. Gilmore Drayton and Josephine Schain, will present a series of concerts at the Neighborhood Playhouse on Grand Street beginning next Friday night.

Patti Moore in "Zig-Zag" NIXON-CONNOLLY PHOTO

Pauline Armitage in "A Question of Virtue" WHITE STUDIO

Janet Beecher in "The Love Child"

PHOTO BY ABBE

Florence Eldridge in "Six Characters in Search of an Author"

Vivian Duncan at the Palace CHAS. SNYDER PHOTO—BOSTON

Vivienne Segal, who will appear at the Equity Annual Ball APEDA PHOTO

Rita Hall in "Greenwich Village Follies" HESSER PHOTO

(Above) Charles King and Elizabeth Hines in "Little Nellie Kelly" WHITE STUDIO

Louise Closser Hale in "Hospitality" IRA D. SCHWARZ PHOTO

## Gloria Foy, Broadway's New Star, Appears Fittingly in 'Up She Goes'

### She Gives Short Answers to Long Questions

What follows is the best account of Gloria Foy that could be obtained in her dressing room the night she made Broadway aware of her as an imminent musical comedy star.

The account is necessarily sketchy, because Miss Foy was, though serenely cool, in no mood to be interviewed; because her room off the stage at the Playhouse was uproarious most of the time with ecstatic actors, managers and friends, and, particularly, because of the 12:24 train for Douglaston, L. I.

One was able to learn, for instance, in the intervals when no excited admirers were present that Miss Foy was born in West Eighty-sixth Street, Manhattan, but not when; that her father and mother were the vaudeville team of Foy and Clark before she went on the stage four years or so ago, but not whether she passed her childhood traveling with them; that she prefers golf to other games, but not what she likes to read; that a personable young man addressed as "Bus" had sent her the rope of pearls she was wearing, but not whether that signified a romance that might soon deprive Broadway of her.

She had just come Monday night, her cheeks showing their own warm flush under the make-up, from the stage where Producer William A. Brady had been giving resonant praise to the members of the "Up She Goes" company for the opening night success of the Frank Craven-Harry Tierney-Joseph McCarthy musical play. He had grown lyrical over her youth and charm and, frankly acknowledging his indebtedness to Mr. Belasco for the phrase, had referred to her as "my little girl." The audience had been immensely impressed with her ingenuous winsomeness through the evening and had voted her their principal favor. She was unknown to them, hardly any save her friends having even heard her name before. One of the best informed critics wrote of her the next morning as being new to Broadway. It had been a personal triumph of some proportions.

She reached her dressing room at 11:19. It was alitter with symbols of her new station, apparently dozens of telegrams in a wire arrangement on one small wall signed "Jim," "William," "Mary" and by other Christian names. The second chair was filled with bouquets. She sat back before her dressing table, relaxed, tired, her lips spread in a wide, happy smile. At 11:21 the interview began. She was born in West Eighty-sixth Street, she went to school in the Holy Angels Convent in Red Bank, N. J., where Miss Alice Brady also had been a pupil. At 11:23 the room was filled with a merry group of friends led by Mrs. William Collier and "Bus." Miss Foy is a protege of the Colliers and lives with them at Douglaston. Arrangements were made for taking the 12:24 train. As "Bus," who was a handsome young man, with black hair and sumptuously dressed, was departing she thanked him for the pearls. "They're straight from Paris," he assured her, a bit pridefully. Her own hair is aureate, varying according to the light from a golden glow to tawny.

The interview proceeded: Her early dancing under the tutelage of her mother, the Clark of the Foy and Clark team, and her début at the Palais Royal four years ago as a dancer.

"I have never been in the chorus," she said amiably at 11:32, when more friends arrived. Their stay was brief. She had, it appeared, gone from the Palais Royal to the musical comedy "What's in a Name?" where she also danced. Then Mr. Ziegfeld had given her a place in the "Midnight Frolic" of last season, where she did a dance number with Leon Errol and an imitation of Marilynn Miller. In March, when Miss Miller was ill for three days, she played Sally. All this while members of the company and their wives and others were stopping by for a word of appreciation. Frederick Graham, who played the elderly but skittish uncle in the piece, said: "You were wonderful, my dear," as he gallantly kissed her hand.

It was while she was on the Ziegfeld Roof that Mr. Brady came to know of her and shaped his plans to give her an opportunity this season.

"I wish you would say for me," she requested, "that I owe everything to Mr. Brady and Mr. Tierney and Mr. McCarthy. They had confidence in me when other managers wouldn't give me a part, and they have been very patient and kind." This was at 11:39, and Mr. Brady himself entered, in a glow over the success of his production, a shapeless cigar in one hand.

"You're the real thing!" he announced with emphasis and without prelude. "Youth—youth conquers the world. We can't find them like you." His enthusiasm was galvanic. She had been tired, her wide blue eyes had been a bit smoky with the fatigue of it all, but they came to life and coruscated. She gave a gleeful little laugh and thanked him. He would hear none of her thanks. "You're the real thing," he repeated, and then he, too, kissed her hand and departed.

It was two years ago that she started to take ballet lessons. She continues them daily. She began singing lessons one year ago and is at them regularly. She works hard. She thinks she would enjoy playing winsome ingenue parts continually. She is not related to the Eddie Foys. She is of Irish and Scotch descent and thinks it an odd mixture.

These things she told before 11:47, erasing the make-up as she talked. Then as the time for the 12:24 grew steadily nearer Miss Foy walked out of the interview into a taxicab.

### At the Columbia

The Maids of America company will present "Varieties a la Mode," written and staged by William K. Wells. Among those in the cast are Jack Shutta, Alfaretta Symonds, Florence De Vere, Mildred Franklin, Fred Reeb, George Leon, Don Trent, Sidney J. Page and Gus Legert.

### "The Dance of Life" Screened

The two Schildkrauts, Joseph and Rudolph, father and son, are to appear in a motion picture called "The Dance of Life," which Eve Unsell has written.

## Hal Skelley Prescribes Work in Stock for Aspiring Comedians

"Comedians are made to order, not born," says Hal Skelley, principal comedian of "Orange Blossoms." "There's many a man and woman, too, who has no more sense of humor than a sober-faced donkey, who has been forced to be a comedian because there was no one else to play some part that was supposed to be a comedy one.

"In the brief rehearsals they would be ordered to overdo their few simple actions; their very grotesqueness brought laughs, and often the player would be smart enough to see possibilities and developed himself into a recognized comedian of a certain type. How many comedians prove successful if given a part to create that does not allow for the little mannerisms of speech and movement they have always depended on for laughter?

"If I am ever chosen to the faculty of a school for comedians I shall insist that the students become members of some struggling but happy little stock company out in the wilds. If it is so much out of the way that news of it never percolates even to the Billboard so much the better, and if in addition to playing six different old timers each week the beginner has to peddle out cough or rheumatism cure as a member of an old-time medicine show it will be best for him.

"Without mentioning any names of the comedians, not many miles from Broadway at this speaking who have done that very thing, let me recall that one who is now in the 'Orange Blossoms' company and bears my name, once performed for a glad season with Dr. Rucker's Famous All-Star Comedians all over the State of Oklahoma and suburbs. We played one night only in some places and as much as three months in some other towns no larger. We played anything we could buy or borrow the story of, and sometimes we played a piece built up entirely from the memory of some one in the cast who had seen a play he liked. If there was not enough of it we added dances and songs. We played 'Erminine' with fourteen people and as the larger thief of the play I wore the costume 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark,' had worn the night before. Who couldn't learn to be comic, and incidentally, why is not such an experience a very good one for a budding playwright? I have 'improved on' Shakespeare many a time because of my bad memory and struggled on while the other players stood in the wings and laughed at my fix on the stage alone. Many a time have I in the character of, let us say Marks in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' started off a speech to the blackened Uncle Tom with 'By all the gods, Othello.'

"All this by the way of proving that a comedian can be such by artful exaggeration. To be sure, as he approaches the spot where the great white light of Broadway beats on him, the coming comedian will be expected to add to his curriculum the arts of exaggerating a common dance step to one intricate and comic, of 'placing' the comedy in a tone as surely as the prima donna does her treasured high C, and outdoing the Sunday cartoons in the expressiveness of his face. Beyond all that, all he really needs is to develop what sense of humor he may have until he knows what is funny among the ideas that may come to him in the dark and lonesome night.

"But first a prospective comedian should go out into the great wide reaches where the world is sober and serious and a little laugh goes a great way."

## Another New Playwright Makes His Bow to Broadway in "Hospitality"

### He Is Leon Cunningham, of Saginaw, Mich.

Some would have it that playwrights are born, not made. And they might put forward Leon Cunningham, author of "Hospitality," which has its premiere at the Equity Forty-eighth Street Theater to-morrow evening, is a living proof of the theory. If he was not born a playwright, he at least became one at a tender age, and when he had reached the mature age of twelve was already producing plays which were sagely reviewed by the dramatic critics of Saginaw, Mich. These masterpieces were produced by the Majestic Stock Company, which boasted of a stage with real footlights, in the upper story of a garage owned by one of the author's friends.

Most of Mr. Cunningham's earliest efforts were melodramas, to be sure, but most carefully produced as far as scenery, costumes and lighting were concerned; the villains always wore mustaches of the deepest dye and the heroines were always dreadfully wronged.

One of these plays was entitled "The Broker's Cousin," and the fact that the budding playwright had a wholesome respect and admiration for the successful man of affairs is evidenced by the fact that the final line of the play, to show to what depths the villain had fallen, was "and to think that you were once a broker's cousin!" Curtain.

However, Cunningham left the field of melodrama in a few years. When he was graduated from high school his class presented a three-act farce entitled "A Count of No Account."

At the University of Michigan two of his plays were presented by the Comedy Club. By way of coincidence, Phylis Povah, who is in the cast of "Hospitality" and who is remembered in New York for her performances in "Mr. Pim Passes By," appeared with Cunningham in several of the plays he wrote for the Comedy Club.

While playwrighting has always been his favorite occupation Mr. Cunningham was for a time a reporter on "The Detroit News," and for a briefer period a bond salesman. After leaving college, however, he decided that while he wanted to write plays he had to make a living in the mean time, and he felt that he was best fitted to do that by acting.

He has appeared with Sothern and Marlowe, Stuart Walker and for various other producers in the last six years. His most recent engagement was with "Only Thirty-eight," when he played the rôle of a bashful college freshman. Incidentally, Mr. Cunningham is only twenty-eight himself and he looks several years younger.

Before the executive board of Equity Players decided on "Hospitality" some 400 plays had been carefully read. Some were by authors of international reputation.

"Hospitality" was written for Louise Closser Hale when Mrs. Hale was playing in "Miss Lulu Bett," but at that time Equity Players had not been formed.

## The Older the Comedy The Fresher the Laugh, Is Maurice Swartz's Theory

Maurice Swartz, whose eighty-odd characterizations in five years at the Jewish Art Theater entitle him to speak from the fullness of knowledge of many kinds of plays, finds it hard to beat the classics for real laugh-getters in the theater.

He was caught between scenes of "The Revizor" ("The Inspector General"), in which he plays Kalestakov, the genial, philandering youth out on a spree from St. Petersburg. "I have learned," said Mr. Swartz, "that for profoundly moving stories of life the contemporary dramatists have a wide range of suitable material to offer an art theater. But for simon-pure merriment the safest chance a theater director can take is the production of a classic comedy.

"Take 'The Revizor,' by Gogol, for instance. Here is a comedy that is eighty years old, and set in a foreign environment. Yet the laughs are the heartiest I have heard in a theater during these last five years.

"Underneath the foreign and the old-fashioned in place and atmosphere in this play is an idea more modern than the bedroom farce. The blustering bully, the high officials cringing before supposed greatness, the coquettes set for conquest, are as funny and as truly human to-day as in Gogol's time. That is why people laugh at this old classic while a modern prohibition wheeze gets no response.

"And the technique of this play is remarkably modern, too. Gogol seemed to have anticipated the motion pictures by threescore years. The end of his first act and the beginning of the third are really continuous; the second act is the movie's pet invention, a 'flash-back' to another bit of action going on simultaneously with the other scenes. And the popular Weber and Fields or Gallagher and Shean act was long ago anticipated in 'The Inspector General' by that immortal duo of Bobchinsky and Dobchinsky.

"Altogether it would appear the older the comedy—if it be a good comedy—the fresher the laugh in this blasé age of farce and comedy."

### "The Bright Shawl" Announced

John S. Robertson, who recently signed a contract with Inspiration Pictures, will make for his first production for that company a picturization of Joseph Hergesheimer's latest novel, "The Bright Shawl." Director Robertson, whose most recent production, Mary Pickford in "Tess of the Storm Country," is being shown at the New York Strand Theater, leaves for Cuba in a few days with Dick Barthelmess and a company to make exteriors for "The Bright Shawl."

### At the Hippodrome

Two new scenes, introducing the Hippodrome ballet of pogo stick girls and the ballet of rope skipping girls, with the Misses Ruth Russell Matlock and Serita Lorraine as the toe-skipping soloists, are announced for the eleventh week of "Better Times," which begins to-morrow.

## Equity Ball Makes Whole Town Talk

### Reported That Party Next Saturday Will Be "Bigger and Better" Than Ever

The most interesting topic of conversation in Broadway theatrical circles right now is the forthcoming Equity annual ball, which will be held at the Hotel Astor on Saturday evening, November 18—and until early the next morning. Indications are, according to Hassard Short on the eve of his departure for Chicago last Thursday, to put on the mid-Western edition of the new "Music Box Revue," that what has come to be considered the greatest social event of the theatrical season will be "bigger and better" than ever this year.

Mr. Short will return to New York this week to stage "The Midnight Jollies," including the now famous pageant "The Women of Equity." Mr. Short also announced that Joseph Herbert will write the lyrics and Henry Hadley not only will compose the music for the march, but will direct it. Frank Tours and Paul Whiteman will conduct the music and Victor Baravalle is coming from Philadelphia to conduct one of the orchestras.

As has been the custom since the inauguration of the Equity balls four years ago, no information is given out as to the details of the pageant, which is the spectacular finale of the entertainment by the leading members, men and women, of Equity.

Mr. Short said merely that it would be "a brand new pageant," in which the women of Equity will be led by Ethel Barrymore as "The Spirit of Equity," and in which the march would be sung by the leading men of Equity.

It is expected that Irene Castle, assisted by William Reardon, will be able to make a flying trip from Philadelphia, where she is now appearing, in order to do a special dance at the affair. Rodolph Valentino and Winifred Hudnut Valentino will do a special "Four Horsemen" tango.

The ballroom will be decorated in the Equity colors of silver and French blue. The ball is scheduled to begin at 11 p. m. and to last until 4 a. m. "The Midnight Jollies," including the pageant, will be from 12:30 to 1:30; supper will be served continuously from 1 to 4 a. m.

Reports from Equity members are that more tickets and boxes have been sold in advance this year than at any time in the history of the organization. Those who already hold boxes are:

Regan Hughston, the Lambs Club, Peggy Boland, Laurette Taylor, A. H. Woods, Charles Dillingham, Florence Reed, Grace La Rue, Jack Henderson, Hassard Short, the Players' Club, Ethel Barrymore, Vivienne Segal, Wilda Bennett, Barney Bernard, James Kirkwood, Harry Allen, Otto Kruger, John Emerson, Alexander P. Moore, William Fox, the Green Room Club, Alfred Selisberg, George Edwin Joseph, Paul M. Herzog, Reginald Ward, Harry Content, John Willard, Ruth Shepley, Herbert Brennon, Mrs. George Fuss, Irving Berlin, Mrs. Sam Harris, Charlotte Greenwood, Francis Cameron, Thomas Meighan, Mrs. Robert Hilliard.

Vera Bloom, Jay Witmark, Edith Dowling and Louise Brown, Ann Mason, Otto Wagner, the Theater Guild, Edmund Bresse, Mary Phillips and J. B. Miller.

Harry Beresford, Violet Heming, Marie Bryar, James Spottswood, Mrs. Shelley Hull, Drelincourt M. Martin and Harold Gould, Fritz Williams, Francis Byrne, Percy Haswell, William Forepaugh, Frank Gillmore, Margaret Wycherly, Mrs. Felix Morris, May Naudain, Joseph Vandenburg and Robert McKay.

## Livingston Platt Evokes Spain for Miss Nance O'Neill and Benavente

Some one has said of modern playwrights in general, and George Bernard Shaw in particular, that they devote more manuscript space to descriptions of the sets and the characters than they do to the play itself. Certainly the charge cannot be applied to Jacinto Benavente, the Spanish playmaker. Indeed, Nance O'Neil, Benavente's American sponsor, wishes it could.

Miss O'Neil first encountered Benavente's laconicism in "The Passion Flower," in which she has been appearing for two seasons. Her latest experience with it has been in "Field of Ermine," which she has just launched on tour preparatory to a New York season.

When Miss O'Neil and her director, Alfred Hickman, set to work on the latter play they found the first act prefaced by just two words, "Natalia's boudoir," the second act by only five, "Drawing room in Irene's home," and the third described tersely as "The same." Nine words in all and not a ray of light in any of them.

The play introduces twenty persons, not one of whom was described or characterized.

Fortunately, there was Livingston Platt. Mr. Platt knew Spain. He knew the sort of an apartment Natalia would have, with its counterfeit panels painted on the walls and its air of unconvincing imitation of French furnishings. He knew, too, that Irene was a marchioness, and that meant good taste and dignity and priceless old pieces. So "Field of Ermine" got its atmosphere despite its author's terseness.

### At the Shubert-Riviera

"The Hotel Mouse," with Frances White and Taylor Holmes in the star rôles, will come to this theater for a week, beginning to-morrow night.