FITCH SHOWS A REAL PLAY

HE PROVES THAT HE IS ABLE TO THINK FOR THREE ACTS.

In "The Happy Marriage," Produced at the Garrick, He Tackles a Vital Theme and Sticks to It—Earnestness in the Place of the Usual Smartness.

A popular subject for discussion among dramatic debating societies for a very considerable number of years has been "Is Clyde Fitch able to think for three acts?" It had been supposed that about all the arguments possible to be made on this subject had been advanced and the judges of debate were about to answer the question in the negative, with honorable mention for the ability displayed by the debaters who upheld the affirmative. But this programme must be revised, for Mr. Fitch has now shown that, all past performances to the contrary notwithstanding, he is able to think for three acts.

It was last evening at the Garrick Theatre that Mr. Fitch scored this notable triumph over Mr. Fitch, the proof he advanced taking the name and shape of a comedy called "The Happy Marriage." It is the first real play that Mr. Fitch's too facile pen has written since "The Truth," and that was only partly real, for at that time Mr. Fitch was apparently able to think for only two acts and filled up the rest with smartness. Mr. Fitch was seldom smart last evening, but he was something much better—he was in earnest.

For once he had the persistency and the intellectual backbone to tackle a vital theme and to stick to it from first to last. It really seems a pity that he has waited so long to grow plump.

"The Happy Marriage" tells of a young wife whose husband, though really fond of her, gives her everything in the world that she wants excepting first place in the distribution of his time. Business gets that. She is too immature and inexperienced to know how to win him away from his abstractions. She feebly tries, but fails. She feels neglected and bitterly hurt and humiliated.

At this juncture comes one of the great majority of young and unattached men who are only too ready to make love to other men's neglected wives. Coincidentally with the arrival of this person an episode occurs in which the young wife is able to see disloyalty on the part of her husband. Disloyalty, added to neglect, is more than she can stand. She resolves to run away with the ardent admirer.

The ardent admirer is not so ardent when he finds that the lady means to be so direct. A snake in the grass liaison was much more in his line. He's not so hotly desirous either of attaching to himself the lady's four-year-old son. In short, he didn't really love the lady. He merely coveted her.

In this juncture the husband learns what has happened from an old family servant. He manages to cover the retreat upon which his wife has resolved when she sees her admirer for the common cad he is, to clear his own action from any suspicion of infidelity, to win the confidence of his wife and to demonstrate that she loves him as much as ever she did. One further understands that he intends to lay a deeper and firmer foundation for permanent marital happiness than the one upon which he had originally builded.

Few persons familiar with the clever but shallow style that Mr. Fitch has too often applied to his stage carpentering would recognize him in this story. Perhaps it heralds the beginning of a new period in his development as a playwright. It is a thing to be hoped. At all events he followed this outline with admirable directness and made of it a drama that played itself out upon the best of all stages—the human mind. Things followed from motives and those motives were for the most part both reasonable and clear.

It may be that we are left with a sneaking suspicion that the young wife will not be devoted permanently and that the husband will not always remember what care it requires to maintain upon love the perpetual bloom of youth. But at any rate the tale of the evening is sincerely told. It has a beginning, a middle and an end.

Mr. Fitch is both fortunate and unfortunate in his players. The husband is impersonated by Edwin Arden, an actor of experience and intelligence. Any part played by this actor is certain to be consistently thought out from beginning to end and the several parts carefully put together. His customary methods have been applied in this case with happy results. It is an excellent performance. There are moments when the player's method is a trifle too visible—when one sees where the parts are put together—but if the leading parts of all plays were as well done playwrights would be fortunate.

It would be pleasant to say as much of the work of Miss Doris Keane, who bears upon her shoulders the heavy burden of the young wife's part. But the truth is that she is overweighted. The more girlish passages she carried off well enough, but for the most part the thing was beyond her powers. It is a big part, to be sure, and it requires an actress of uncommon resource, but there can be little doubt that the play lost much of its possible effect through her inability to give full effect to the lines.

It was a respectable performance. She never offended save by an occasional slipshod utterance, but there were passages in the play that should have gripped but that only threatened to grip, and the failure seemed generally traceable to the sub-calibre quality of the leading feminine performer. Milton Sills was the ardent lover whose ardor cooled, and his performance was very nearly all it should have been.

The play was very well received, there being many curtain calls after the final curtain and the audience declining to depart without a word of thanks from Mr. Fitch.

Conried Gets His Commission.

Heinrich Conried got an order yesterday from Justice Hendrick in the Supreme Court that a commission be appointed to take his deposition in the suit brought by him against the Conried-Metropolitan Opera Company to recover $20,000 due him on a contract. Counsel will go abroad to conduct the examination.

Mrs. Sol Smith Russell Ill.

Mrs. Sol Smith Russell, widow of the actor, is seriously ill at the home of her son-in-law, Richard Fuller, at 310 West Ninety-seventh street. Mrs. Russell was taken sick yesterday morning. The doctors were not certain as to the exact nature of her ailment, but apparently she is suffering from a nervous breakdown.

No Extra Charge for It.

Advertisements for THE SUN and THE EVENING SUN may be left at any American District Messenger office in the city.

WARM WELCOME TO DODSON.

The Veteran Actor Has a Part That Fits Him in "The House Next Door."

J. E. Dodson was welcomed back to New York last night in a way that must have warmed the cockles of his heart. Indeed, he said as much in the little speech he made at the end of the second act of "The House Next Door," produced at the Gaiety Theatre. The greeting was doubly happy in that he returned to his long time friends in a part so thoroughly adapted to him that from the moment of his entrance every one in the audience knew that he was going to see this admirable character actor at his very best.

Mr. Dodson's rôle was that of *Sir John Cotswold, Bart.*, with all the Conservative's pride of birth and position and repugnance to the new order of English social life. He was almost the traditional choleric old gentleman of English comedy. But he was more than that he was human, with an occasional warm, human emotion, and more than once a sense of humor. *Sir John* believed that he stood a rock against the encroaching tide of an alien race that threatened to swallow up English politics, business and society.

Even when these aliens, to whom he had lost his fortune, came into his own home and won his family's loyalty away from him he still stood out against them, opposing their reason with his mighty pride of birth. So long as *Sir John* maintained his attitude, so long as his pride held firm, the character was convincing. But when, after a few minutes soliloquy, he reasons himself entirely out of the convictions of a lifetime and without the slightest apparent distress to the pride that has hitherto been his mainstay yields the entire controversy, not even Mr. Dobson's art can make the character consistent.

In his curtain speech Mr. Dodson said that the author, Hartley Manners, wished it understood that this was in no sense a problem play, but distinctly a comedy. It would be a mistake to consider it as a serious attempt to solve the vexed question of the intermarriage of Jews and gentiles. Mr. Manners has seen too many other playwrights go to pieces on that rock. As a comedy only can it be considered.

The first act, placed in *Sir John Cotswold's* home, the rent of which was long unpaid, was a delight. The Cotswold family, each one a neatly drawn character, were gathered together on the morning after the son's successful début in opera. *Ulrica*, the daughter, was devoted to her brother and loyal to her father, but at the same time chafing against the tyrannical rule which the old gentleman kept over his household, bankrupt but for her efforts, and secretly cherishing a fondness for the son of the hated Jewish family next door. *Cecil*, the son, had broken away from his father's old fashioned ideas in his years of foreign study, while the mother oscillated between him and her husband, who could not reconcile himself to the fact that his son would sing before common people for money, while at the same time he felt a human pride in his success.

Into this family group came the second generation of the House Next Door, the two young Jacobsons, children of the man whose money making faculty had acquired for him an immense fortune which included all the estate of the Cotswolds, on which his father had lived as a humble laborer. The inevitable marriage of the Cotswolds and Jacobsons became evident.

The second act is in the Jacobson family circle, with the young people there too, arrayed against the prejudices of the parents. The mother was a vulgar, designing type, with social ambitions, the daughter a pleasantly silly young person, the son of the same type, and the father possessed of so many virtues that he was almost too good to be true. To them came *Sir John*, whose gray hairs excused his bad manners and who seemingly made the contemplated marriages utterly impossible.

The third act, of course, brought the love affairs out very comfortably by the simple, if somewhat disappointing expedient of having the two fathers yield up entirely every tradition of their race and upbringing.

In his efforts to make *Sir Isaac Jacobson* a man of great nobility and high ideals the author has succeeded in making him uninteresting. The character lacks sincerity throughout, and is not helped by Thomas Findlay, whose voice was as monotonous as his acting.

Lady Jacobson, conventionally played by Miss Eleanor Moretti, was unduly exaggerated, but the rôle was evidently intended to throw into even greater prominence the many virtues of her husband.

Esther Jacobson was made superlatively ingenue by Miss Farnia Marinoff, and *Ulrica Cotswold* was made a somewhat grudgingly dutiful daughter by Miss Mabel Roebuck.

William J. Kelley was *Cecil*, the opera singer, and Herbert Standing was a very noisy pink faced musical agent.

HAMMERSTEIN SAILS TO-DAY.

Hasn't Yet Decided About a Season of Opera in English.

Oscar Hammerstein sails to-day on the Kronprinz Wilhelm for a two months stay in Europe. Many singers of the Manhattan company go with him, but Mary Garden, who expected to sail, was compelled at the last minute to change her plans. Her mother is ill.

"I go directly to Paris," Mr. Hammerstein said, "but I can remain there only a few hours as I must hurry to Berlin to confer with Richard Strauss concerning the production of 'Elektra.' He has already cabled that he wants Mme. Labia to sing the title rôle and there are other details about the production that I must discuss with him.

"Whether or not I give my English season on my return has not been settled and depends in a measure on the artists I find abroad. I have practically selected half a dozen of them. If they are as good as I expect them to be and their demands are not out of all reason I shall bring them over to be the principals of my English season, which is to begin in August. I shall attempt no novelties in that engagement but stick to the regular répertoire. I am going abroad now to engage a number of French artists who are also capable of singing in Italian.

"I have had a most successful year, closing with a very prosperous two weeks in Boston. I feel more firmly established than ever. By this time next season I will be making arrangements for the opening of my opera house in Brooklyn, on which work will be begun as soon as I get back. I think I am most fortunate in possessing the exclusive rights to 'Thaïs,' 'Louise,' 'Pelléas et Mélisande' and 'Salome.' These are now the best liked operas in the répertoire and are capital enough for any manager."

Mr. Hammerstein returns in the first week in June.

Cleofonte Campanini sails on the same steamship to conduct during the season at Covent Garden. Marie Sammarco, Giuseppe Taccani, Mr. and Mrs. William Girard, Hector Dufranne and Maurice Vallés will also sail. Mme. Tetrazzini, who goes to London, sails to-morrow on the Mauretania.

HILDA SPONG SUES.

Says Harold R. Durant Owes Her $876.59 for Scenery and Services.

Hilda Spong, the actress, is the plaintiff in a suit in the Supreme Court to recover $876.59 from Harold R. Durant, an author and theatrical manager. She obtained an order yesterday from Justice Hendrick permitting her to serve her summons and complaint by publication. She says that she agreed on October 31, 1908, to supply the scenery for a play of his entitled "A Man and His Mate," in which she was to play a star part. For her scenery and services she was to receive $250 a week for four weeks. She got only $123.13 and sues for the rest.

"THE CLIMAX" WORTH WHILE

AN UNUSUAL PLAY WITH MUSIC THAT IS EFFECTIVE.

Only Four Persons in the Cast, but They Are Real and What They Do Interests the Audience—Further One of Them Is an Actress Who Also Can Sing.

"The Climax" is a play that is highly unusual in a variety of ways. It was produced unostentatiously at a matinée performance yesterday at Weber's Theatre before an audience that was none too large, but before the last curtain fell it had made itself as welcome as the spring flowers of which the Easter Monday sunshine outside was hinting.

One of the unusual features of the piece is the size of the cast. There are only four persons in it. It tells the story of a girl with a singing voice who has grand opera ambitions that are justifiable. She is living in New York with an elderly Italian who is both a distant relative and her singing master. He is full of dreams of the future when her success shall make them both famous. The third member of the quartet is the youthful son of the singing master. The fourth is a plain physician from back home at Azalea, Ohio. He cares nothing about the artistic temperament. The stage is a devil of a place for a woman, he says, and he declares further that not one woman in ten can achieve success upon it and at the same time avoid its pitfalls. He loves the girl, but she prefers her ambition to his love.

It seems that a famous specialist, a friend of the young physician, performs an operation on the girl's throat which if successful is certain to improve her voice. There is one chance in a thousand that the operation will fail. By the aid of mental suggestion and improper supplementary treatment the young physician manages that the girl finds the one chance. Her voice fails. Then, confident that her career is at an end, she turns to him, as he had foreseen. In the excitement attending preparations for the wedding, however, she neglects the treatment which he had prescribed for her throat and which was paralyzing the vocal cords. Lo! the beautiful voice comes back. She turns from her lover again to her career, though there are not wanting indications that the two may not long prove incompatible.

Ordinarily the play about a wonderful painter or sculptor or singer is unconvincing for the reason that the actor who impersonates the prodigy can neither sing nor paint. But in this case Miss Leona Watson, who plays the girl with the voice, really has a voice, and it is a voice quite good enough to maintain the necessary illusion. Moreover she can not only sing but also she can act. As everybody who is at all familiar with opera knows, this is a rare combination. In the present case it makes strongly for the success of the play.

Melody is wound about the story from first to last. The youthful son of the singing master is a pianist and a composer and he really can play the piano. He is engaged on the composition of a song. It gives him a lot of trouble, but in the end he does the trick, and at the end, when the girl's voice comes back, stronger and sweeter than ever, it is in his song that she pours out its floods.

Edward Locke, who wrote the play, has put some very real people into it. He has shown a deal of ingenuity in making the music a vital part of his story and the life that his people live on the stage has much verisimilitude. There are moments when he becomes a trifle over sentimental, but on the whole the thing has a welcome and genuine simplicity. It would be too much to say that he has made the most of his opportunities, but he has told a story that is both pretty and ingeniously original.

For the most part the acting is uncommonly good. Miss Watson, as already said, is an unusual combination of singer and actress. It is not necessary here to pronounce upon the quality of her vocalism any more than to say that it was quite good enough to convince her auditors that the girl in the play had every reason to hope for success upon the operatic stage. Her acting was both simple and sincere, and in the tense moments following the revelation that she had lost her voice she got the maximum of emotional grip with the minimum of apparent effort. She was heartily applauded and she deserved it.

The part of the old singing master, a lovable, hot tempered old fellow, was enacted by Albert Bruning, who is known to discriminating theatregoers as one the best players of the time. He imparted to the character a mellowness, a tenderness and a depth of charm that can never result save from a combination of intellectual bigness with professional skill and experience. Effingham Pinto, the youthful composer of the play, is a very young man. He was self-conscious at times, but in moments of real feeling he proved effective. William Lewers, as the young physician, had rather an unpleasant part, but his manly appearance and sincerity of demeanor made it comparatively grateful, though at moments he was unduly emphatic.

The incidental music that ran all through the piece and which contributed so much to its effectiveness is by Joseph Carl Breil. Unusual and sweet, "The Climax" is very well worth while. For a time it will be presented only at matinées on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

GRACE GEORGE IN "DIVORCONS."

Revives Sardou's Play by Way of Contrast With "A Woman's Way."

These are the days of the revivals of old plays for one or perhaps just a few performances. Sometimes these plays are revived just for the pure joy of presenting them, masterpieces which age cannot wither. Sometimes they are presented as a vehicle for the display of talent which engages public attention in the lighter, flimsier, passaway kind of play. Such an occasion was presented yesterday afternoon at a special matinée at the Hackett Theatre when Miss Grace George appeared in "Divorçons."

Miss George has been presenting in a delightful manner for some time a modern piece known as "A Woman's Way." She played Sardou's delicate comedy by way of contrast. The playbill in propriety might have named the old play in parenthesis "A Man's Way." The two represent the old and the new ways of dealing with unhappy couples who really love each other and foolishly think they need a divorce.

Miss George has played the part of *Cyprienne* before and has done it well. She repeated her pleasing interpretation yesterday. In the light, teasing side, the roguish, kittenish portrayal of the comedy, she lived up to the well deserved reputation that she has been accumulating for several years by patient work, assisted by an intelligence and a temperament that has swept obstacles aside. By nature she is not constituted for sounding great depths and she made no serious attempt at it, contenting herself with emphasizing delicately and delightfully the farcical side of a domestic contretemps.

That finished actor Frank Worthing played the part of the crafty and coaxing husband. Mr. Worthing has almost reached that place in comedy where he can do no wrong and hence it jarred some to hear him pronounce catch ketch, not once but two or three times. The other parts were up to the modern standard and Henry Miller, Jr., took all that was coming to him as the foil for both husband and wife and got out of his part pretty nearly all there was in it as the fool and spurned lover.

Revivals even by way of contrast and out of pure sentiment are worth while occasionally, as Miss George and her company showed yesterday by an excellent presentation of a very old and a very dear dramatic friend.

"THE MASCOT" IS REVIVED.

Old Timers Again Delight in Music Popular 28 Years Ago.

The dear old "Mascot," produced in this country in 1881—how many years is that ago?—was put on again last night at the New Amsterdam Theatre with a modern musical comedy cast. The question which confronts the prophet is: "How much music will the Broadway of to-day stand in its musical comedy?"

To the old codger the good old airs were pure delight and last night's audience, which patently was composed not altogether of old timers, applauded vigorously and seemed to feel the same way that the audiences felt—is it twenty-eight years ago? Yes, so it is, almost—between twenty-seven and twenty-eight any way. But who can tell about first night audiences—whether they are altogether sincere or not? It is to be hoped that last night's was sincere at any rate.

To be sure, the New Amsterdam is not so much a stranger to tunes as some of the other houses along the alley, for was not "The Merry Widow" blooming there not so long ago? But she had come with all the charm of novelty and with the piquancy of a new and said to be startling dance added. "The Mascot" has no dance worthy the name. Will it be able to get along without it?

The revival was made the occasion for the return of Raymond Hitchcock to Broadway. He had a part which suited him and which he did in a manner which compared favorably with the comedians who have preceded him as *Lorenzo XVII.* That famous hair which always falls down over his face at the psychological moment was missing, to be sure; but Hitchcock proved last night that he could act without the aid of that lock of hair. It was snugly repressed under an altogether ill looking wig, and still Hitchcock got over the footlights.

To be sure the man who wrote the opera gave something for the chief comedian to do without depending wholly on that gentleman's own peculiar personality—but that was a way librettists had in those days. It may be considered bad form for a comedian to take advantage of the work of a librettist in this way nowadays, but Hitchcock did it, and thereby made good. Perhaps, after all Hitchcock is an old codger.

One of the failures in Edmond Audran's appeal to a modern production is that he demanded singing even in a light comedy opera. In order to overcome this old fashioned notion the producers took into the cast a few persons who could handle the music, and presumably that they might not be too far behind the times some who couldn't. Flora Zabelle, for instance, was equal to the occasion both in the matter of acting and in the matter of using her voice. Altogether she was a charming *Bettina*, with a piquant Arabic cast all her own. Estelle Wentworth too evidently was engaged because she sings—as *Lorenzo's* daughter *Fiametta* she helped in a lot af ways, particularly when there was music to be handled.

And now for those who were not engaged because of their voices. It is too bad to put Henry Coote in this class, for he sang some of his stuff well—and maybe, after the strain of a first night is over, he will be lifted into the preceding delegation. He was a first rate *Pippo* in many ways—but it must be confessed that he did not help Miss Zabelle all he might have done in that famous duet which we like to whistle—and for that it is hard to forgive him. Edgar Atchison-Ely, it may be presumed, does not expect to be classed as a singer; his lisp as the much bandied about *Frederic* was a pleasure and, anyhow, Mr. Atchison-Ely does much better without a blonde wig, which the exigencies of the part gave him last night. Edward M. Favor was the *Rocco* and he was satisfactory—which is saying a lot, for the part is no sinecure.

The changes in the old book were not many; now and then a nowadays phrase or joke crept in, but there was no attempt to make the old favorite a "Broadway show." There wasn't even a single blush in the whole evening, which may be taken as a curse or a blessing according to the kind of mind the prospective ticket purchaser may have. Like any old play, there were moments when the humor seemed a little childish—but it didn't seem so twenty odd years ago; and at least it is healthy now. Perhaps the fact that it has withstood so many years may in a sense be taken as a "character" for it.

Those who saw "The Mascot" when it was first brought to this country from Paris will gasp a little at the present production—they didn't feel they could spend so much money in those days. The production is one that might be called "adequate"—it filled the eye at every moment; and if one were too young to enjoy the old humor he still could look at the scenery while his elders were laughing at the old time joke. And—wonder of wonders!—the chorus could sing and the orchestra could play! If sometimes the tempo was not quite what the old codger remembers—why, maybe his memory is at fault!

Last night's audience certainly did enjoy the play. It laughed at every line that was supposed to be laughed at—a little. But where it came in strong in the matter of approval was with regard to the music.

"IF I WERE KING."

Sothern Revives McCarthy's Play Before a Host of Admirers.

E. H. Sothern gave his familiar and acceptable rendering of Justin H. McCarthy's play of romance and adventure, "If I Were King," at Daly's Theatre last evening and pleased a large number of his admirers with his well sustained portrayal of duty and honor aroused in a vagabond with glorious service for a crafty and almost senile king, all for the love of woman far above the deceit and guile of the Louis XI. time in which they all lived.

The lines of Mr. McCarthy's play lend themselves to stirring elocution and the situations created are not far removed at times from extremely dramatic possibilities. Mr. Sothern rose to the full opportunities of the play with admirable spirit and action and carried his illusions so far that one found it not difficult to understand something of the intrigue, baseness and utter treachery which one reads of in these peaceful days as surrounding the courts of corrupt and debauched monarchs of old.

Mr. Sothern was assisted by a company of capable actors. Miss Gladys Hanson looked quite regal as the noble and pure minded *Katherine de Vaucelles* and in the gallows scene at the end was truly convincing in her interpretation of what sacrifice by a woman of rank means to marry a brawler who has proved himself a man and saved a kingdom to its people.

Miss Virginia Hammond deserves an especial word of praise for her work as the vagabond girl dying for the love of the vagabond man who had grown to too great a height for her love and devotion. The play was staged with the care that Mr. Sothern usually displays on his productions and the spectacle was presented in a manner that marks the high level which the work of this excellent actor has reached in recent years.

Managers to Take Up Shubert Matter To-day.

There will be a meeting of the Theatrical Managers' Association at the Hotel Astor this morning to act upon the resignation of the Shuberts from the organization. According to the present plans the members will assemble at 11 o'clock.

Hippodrome Begins Its Fifth Year.

The New York Hippodrome began yesterday the fifth year of its history. The performance last night was the 1909th in the big playhouse. Since it opened nine productions have been made, and on an average of 900 persons have been employed every season.

FOUR ACTS OF CHUCKLES

THE ARMSTRONG-BEACH FARCE IS OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

"Going Some" at the Belasco Is All About a College Boy Who Isn't an Athletic Hero but a Plain Bluffer—A Foot Race Keeps Audience Guessing.

Paul Armstrong and Rex Beach, take care! One of these days the Playwrights Union will hold a special meeting to consider their cases and expel them. Think of any pair of playwrights daring to write a play around a foot race run by a college boy in which the athletic youngster isn't a child wonder and a savior of the nation. That's the case in "Going Some," the farce comedy by Armstrong and Beach, which was seen last night at the Belasco Theatre.

The enormity of their crime grows when one thinks of "The College Widow" and the football game won by the greatest halfback ever, who has been on view for three acts before the climax. Or how about "Brown of Harvard," which might have been called "Saved by a Substitute"? Remember "Strongheart" and another football hero! Think of the violation of ethics to make the "athlete" a bluffer, a youngster who poses as a sprinter but who in reality couldn't beat a three legged sacred cow in a hundred yard dash. Armstrong and Beach did do it, and what is more they produced a play that kept everybody chuckling for four acts, held an audience in suspense over the result of the contest and made all the men in the audience happy.

This college hero business sort of gets on the nerves of the average man. The stage character is always so superior to all of us ordinary mortals. That's why the men in last night's audience at the Belasco felt so good over the latest hero. Any fat man among them could have done as well as he did, and he won at that.

It happened on the Flying Heart Ranch in New Mexico. The cowboys were sports, but bad losers, and when a recruit came to camp and showed some ability as a runner they matched him against the cook of the rival Centipede outfit and bet everything they had on their man, including the phonograph, which sang "The Holy City" so beautifully that when they thought of it afterward they removed their hats. The Centipede man won and the Flying Heart runner only escaped because guns were not handy.

That was the condition of affairs when *J. Wallingford Speed* of Yale arrived on the scene. He let the girls think he was a great athlete. As a matter of fact he wore a football suit on the side lines, but never played; put on a baseball uniform in the spring, but never played; posed as a runner in running togs, but neglected to run. He did lead the cheering, however.

His "trainer" came with him to add to the effect, and the reports of his ability as a sprinter got to the cowboys. They promptly matched him, play or pay, against the Centipede's cook and bet everything they had left on him. *Speed* agreed readily enough. The intercollegiate sprinting champion was due before the day of the race, and it would be easy to have an accident and get the latter to take his place.

The champion came all right, but he had a broken foot. The cowboys couldn't call the race off. They stood to lose their money and they had only suspicions that *Speed* wasn't as good as he pretended to be. They weren't in a humor to lose again and things looked pretty bad for *Speed* and his trainer if *Speed* lost. So the youngster had to run, but he fixed the race with his opponent beforehand, so everything came through all right and of course he won the girl, who had believed in him all along.

This bare outline of the play does not and cannot give much idea of the humor of it. The lines are bright all the way through, with many a hearty laugh for good measure, and two or three of the characters are particularly well drawn. There was a glee club tenor, for example. He was a fat boy put in eclipse by the "athlete," who insisted upon singing "Dearie." Herbert Cothell made him a most natural and amusing figure.

Then the athletic trainer with a beautiful flow of picturesque slang, most of which rang true, and a Mexican cowboy, played with the most skill of all by E. L. Fernandez. His was not a comedy part. It was "straight character" and was done in a thoroughly artistic manner.

As *Speed* Lawrence Wheat had the centre of the stage most of the time. His part was so good that he succeeded with it, but he made the youngster a bit too fresh, flip and self-satisfied. Of the women in the cast, Oza Waldorp, Muriel Starr and Laura Lormers, they had little to do and did it not particularly well. Crosby Little as a Mexican girl who flirted with all the men in sight and said not a word was by far the most convincing of the actresses.

The play caught on immediately. It's a thoroughly enjoyable little thing that will amuse a lot of people who do not take their playgoing seriously.

VIOLIN AND PIANO MUSIC.

Matinee Concert of Germaine Arnaud and Albany Ritchie.

Albany Ritchie, violinist, and Germaine Arnaud, pianist, gave a concert yesterday afternoon in Mendelssohn Hall. The first number on the programme was the sonata, opus 13, for piano and violin, of Gabriel Fauré. This work is no novelty here, though audiences are not overburdened with repetitions of its pleasing melancholy. It is by no means important in the character of its thematic thought or in the manner of its treatment. The latter indeed is often of the most obvious kind. But it is a sufficiently musical composition to fill the time which it occupies and it affords opportunity for some good playing.

Its performance yesterday was less satisfying than exacting listeners would demand. The chief cause of this was the violinist's uncertainty of intonation and general dryness of tone. Miss Arnaud on the other hand played the piano part with excellent smoothness and facility and in many parts with genuine musical taste. Mr. Ritchie was heard to better advantage in his first solo number, which was the familiar "Symphonie Espagnole" of Lalo.

In this he delivered the slow movement with sentiment and with something like balance of phrase and nuance. The first and last movements had spirit, but were not technically flawless. Mr. Ritchie played also Bach's "Chaconne" and some short solo numbers. Miss Arnaud was heard in études and the A flat polonaise of Chopin and pieces by Schumann and Guiraud.

ORDERED WIFE OUT OF COURT

When Husband She Accused Showed a Note She Had Written to Him.

Mrs. Charlotte Haebner, wife of Paul Haebner, a produce dealer of 259 Jefferson street, Williamsburg, caused her husband's appearance in the Manhattan avenue police court yesterday on a charge of not properly supporting her. Haebner told Magistrate O'Reilly he couldn't see why he should support the woman, because she was infatuated with another man. In support of his story he handed a note left for him by his wife a few nights ago. It said:

"Paul—Your supper is in the oven. I have gone to a show with the only man I love. CHARLOTTE."

The Magistrate ordered Mrs. Haebner to leave the court room quickly and then dismissed the complaint.

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