

THE GAMBLER OF THE WEST

THIS REVIEW IS A BIT TARDY, BUT THERE IS A REASON.

A Play Showing That the Great Thing in the Drama is Simplicity—The Flower of the East Escapes the Villain and Likewise the Brooklyn Troiters.

Al H. Woods, as he is popularly known—Aloysius H. Woods, to give him his name in full—presented yesterday at the Court Theatre, Brooklyn, a play of modern life entitled "The Gambler of the West" for the 968th time. The play is now in its fourth year. It is by Owen Davis, a young Harvard man, one of the band of youngest dramatists from the Massachusetts college who with Edward Sheldon, author of "Salvation Nell" and "The Nigger," recently produced at the New Theatre, caused William Archer not long ago to remark that nowadays when undergraduates meet in "The Yard" they do not ask when one got home last night but "how is the second act getting along?"

No apologies are offered by THE SUN this morning for the delay in reviewing "The Gambler of the West." It is one of those creations that must be thought over for a time so that the pulse of the public may be taken before hastily subjecting the work to serious criticism. And besides, the effort to keep up with the daily output of Mr. Davis and Mr. Theodore Kremer leaves critics of the drama a bit behind.

"The Gambler of the West" is in Mr. Davis's earlier style. When the playwright left Harvard with his diploma he tells the tale in a straight Broadway way with a tragedy in the verse under his arm. Having enough money left to hire a hansom cab at the Grand Central he drove over to Broadway and showed his tragedy to a Broadway manager. Not long afterward a can was tied to him and he was chased to the Battery—in fact this occurred on the same afternoon as his arrival.

Wherefore Mr. Davis wrote "Chinatown" and "The Millionaire and the Policeman's Wife" and now lives at the Waldorf.

Mr. Davis has grasped in "The Gambler of the West" that the be all and end all of the drama is simplicity—simplicity that is simple and wholesome without being thin or bare. In a sentence, Sal, who is questionable, wants the hero, Mike, who also is questionable, wants the gal; the gal, whose revolver alone side her throughout the play to save that which is dearer to her than life itself, also wants the hero; and Dick, who has the money left to the gal, who is his step-sister—for when Dick's stepfather died he left Dick nothing but a dying wish.

Applause greeted the second violin as he entered the orchestra pit last night, followed by the other members of the orchestra, applause that even Manager Harry Bryan joined in with, tired as he was from sitting up all the night before at the bicycle races. But the play's the thing.

While the curtain was rising the bar-keeper of the "Aurora" in Wyoming cried "You lie!" and shot a client, and the exposition then began. When the smoke cleared away there was unfolded to the audience a small room in the West with a plain bear skin stretched on the wall and countless bottles and cases of champagne arranged back of the counter. Davis here grips the audience immediately by setting forth that there is a missing child, long ago stolen by the Indians, and that a sweet girl from the East soon is to arrive to find out whether the child still lives or whether the child is her long lost brother, who now should have grown out of short pants, and no father, the author intimates whether the child is dead or found living or dead. Thus the suspense is maintained until the end of the twelfth scene.

Widely enough in this Western camp are a humorous Hebrew comedian and an equally humorous Irish scoundrel. These two and the hero, Lucky Jack Gordon, the gambler, are the only ones who the audience don't want to see shot—if we except, for the sake of argument, the heroine, Mabel Reg, the Eastern flower, who gets in later and heads straight toward the "Aurora" bar.

On the other hand, as opposing forces, are Mike Kelly, the principal villain; Chief Red Fox, a bad Indian, and Tenderfoot Sal, who is a hussy. Sal is not all that one could wish, but this mercifully is thinly veiled.

There's a little tad too, an Indian lad—at least a beautiful little white boy in Indian costume—who enters early. A number of times he is shot at and is repeated and repeated while he is on the stage saving the sweet girl from the East. Early one wonders half aloud, "This is the missing child stolen long ago?"

The heroine from the East enters the bar to sing. The hero, wearing a frock coat and high top boots, is seen reading the 2 P. M. edition of a New York evening paper of that day, which has come in on the same train with the heroine and has been added to the band which is about to be insulted by a drunken gambler and that the hero will save her before they have been properly introduced, a critic could not help asking whether or not playwright Davis had not erred in having the hero on the stage before the affair was offered.

The hero did save the girl and then strolled out. Scarce had he left when the hussy Sal entered and offered to take the girl to her own home. And what a home it was! Inasmuch as the same situation occurs in Mr. Sheldon's play for Mrs. Fiske, is it not fair to ask what thought of the playwright?

ADVERTISEMENTS

"Black" Opal Scarf Pins for Men

A Gift Suggestion by Marcus & Co., Jewelers, 5th Avenue, at 45th Street.

BLACK OPAL is pretty well known now by reputation, but to really know this new gem it must be possessed. No greater pleasure can be

"Play for me again—and God help you, Jack!" [Music.] "In the name of heaven [allegro] draw three cards, the ace of spades, the ace of hearts and the ace of clubs. 'Hal! I got three aces and two kings. (Fortissimo) is that good?' But it wasn't. The hero held not only four aces but also aces. And as the hero clasped the girl whom he had won in his arms they threw him out again. She learned at last, in a scene that divided one of a later one in "The Great Divide," that the little Indian boy, so often had saved her was indeed her brother. (Music.) He would go back to the East with her, Little Great Bear, perhaps to enter a college and make the squad, but just as he was to tear himself away and go back to his people his Indian foster father came along in the chariot with a scow and kicked him on the map.

He was dying in the last act, Little Great Bear, from the cruel beating he had received through the eyes of the tepee open to the wind and the audience it was learned that a portion of ribs had punctured the outer rim of his lungs. For the time being he was therefore forgivable as he entered the child's life for the last time—could kick like a mule.

Worse than that, the flower of the East was tied to a canvas tree just outside the tepee where the little lad writhed. But a faithful horse came along, beautifully white and silky down his spines, and the horse tugged at a rope which hoisted the Star Spangled Banner, the Flag of Our Republic, high above the scowling cliffs of the great state. Brought down that was the sign that Wyoming Jack, the hero, and freedom from bondage and physical pain, and what is far greater, a surcease of the mightier terror that was the Indian, were about to be dropped and the heroine and the little boy and the hero hurried over to a restaurant in Jerusalem Street, where the hero and heroine were to eat before beating it back to Manhattan.

"IL MAESTRO DI CAPELLA"

An Old Opera Buffs by Paer Heard at the New Theatre.

The musical department of the New Theatre pursued the uneven tenor of its educational career by unearthing yesterday afternoon a buried one act opera entitled "Il Maestro di Capella." The work was originally called "La Maitre de Capelle," for its text was penned by the French novelist Marie Frances Sophia Gay (the original Marie Gay). Its music was composed by Ferdinand Paer and it was produced at Feydeau in 1821.

The composer had attained the experience of fifty years of life when he wrote it. It is a merry little opera and it was received yesterday with evidence of satisfaction by an audience which was large for the New Theatre. There is no great tale in this opera. It is all about a composer who has written an opera called "Cypriote" and fallen in love with the actress who played it.

He plays on the spinet, he sings passages, he directs the orchestra, in this case farcically the orchestra before the footlights, and he teaches his pretty cook to sing his florid melodies. The two numbers which are regarded with the respect due to classics in their kind are the long descriptive air of the composer and the duet "Perche, perche," which he sings with the cook. In the good old days when Paer was a living issue his little opera was a success in the theatre of success in its field as "Agnès" in that of opera seria.

The performance yesterday was apparently given chiefly to show Mr. Paer in one of his favorite buffo parts. The experiment was a happy one. The retort little barytone entered into the role of the composer with a gusto and a tone to the orchestra and the cook were observed with abundant laughter. Alma Giuk, whose industry has thus far been confined to the theatre, achieved a real success as Gertrude, the cook.

Her impersonation had life, piquancy and musical quality. The young woman is in her first season on the stage, but is more of a prima donna than the three flaccid and gaseous nonentities who are the results of the explorations of the combination of financial and theatrical success at the head of Metropolitan operatic affairs.

"THE GYPSY BARON" IN GERMAN

Strauss's Comic Opera Given at the Irving Place Theatre.

These are said by expert authorities to be days of too much opera, but there is a large audience last night at the Irving Place Theatre, which is contributing its share toward the supply of comic opera offered to New Yorkers. This theatre confines itself strictly to the Viennese repertoire, which lies better within the powers of the company than other varieties of this school might.

So far Johann Strauss has supplied most of the material, and it might be said that the theatre to work this fruitful vein further and produce "The Merry War," which has not been heard here in years. The audience showed that there is a large public for the German operetta even when they are given with the kind of force and vigor that is characteristic of such a varied repertoire as the Irving Place. The orchestra is the weakest point in these performances and really the only one that is such a source of regret. George Neussner, who was an *Isolde* in her time, sang *Ositta* and acted it with her unflinching dramatic intelligence, while Emil Greder, also of a distinguished past, combined the performance as *Prinzold*. Heinrich de Carro as the wealthy pig owner, Lina Haenschel as his daughter, and Hedwig Richard as *Saffi* were all capable of the best. The hero, who had run down to see the performance which is characteristic of all German performances of these works and so indispensable to their success.

THE BOSTON ORCHESTRA

DINDY'S SECOND SYMPHONY PERFORMED.

A Well Constructed Composition Replete in Acrid Harmonies—Mme. Olga Samaroff Plays Schumann's Piano Concerto in a Colorful Style.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra has come to town again and has once more brought Vincent d'Indy's symphony in B flat with it. The composition was produced here under the direction of Mr. Gerlicke on January 12, 1904, and it was again performed by this orchestra under the baton of Mr. d'Indy himself on December 7, 1905. On both occasions the music aroused speculation and spinal shivers simultaneously. But on neither was it so superbly played as it was last night.

Many beautiful thoughts have been uttered in Paris and Boston about Mr. d'Indy, his compositions in general and this symphony in particular, and lately the inhabitants of the cultivated city over against Cape Cod asked to have it repeated for their delectation. Judging from the demeanor of last night's audience the work will be vouchsafed another three years rest before the voice of its chromatic turtle doves are heard again in this land.

Mr. d'Indy once admitted that he had a dramatic conception in mind in the plan of this symphony. Its form is the "development of a veritable action." This is an explanation that does not greatly help, for while it is quite plain that there is an emotional scheme in the work we have been told that it will be useless to search for the key to the enigma.

There is much excellent formal workmanship in this symphony. The composition begins his first movement with a principal theme worthy of Strauss, bold, brilliant and calling for virtuosity from the horn. The second theme is equally striking in character and the working out shows good musicianship, but it wants a climax. The other movements utilize parts of the themes heard in the first, and introduce new matter so that the development of the composition has a keen intellectual interest. The slow second movement, elegiac in nature, has a march like the second theme, which teaches us that Mr. d'Indy has heard the "Fantastic Symphony" of Berlioz.

The third movement, an intermezzo, suggests a country festival about the time of the lemon harvest. The finale begins with an introduction and fugue and ends with a rondo. The introduction recapitulates themes already heard and the fugue is reared on the cantabile theme of the first movement. New matter is introduced and the whole comes to a conclusion with a chorale supposedly sung by monks who have sought the cloister because of utter disappointment with the joys of life.

The instrumentation of this symphony is luscious in its tonal richness and there is a general display of musical scholarship. But Mr. D'Indy's melodic and harmonic idioms belong to the outer extreme of that pungent world of dissonance in which Mr. Debussy dreams his operatic visions and Mr. Strauss makes opus of song and story.

Much of this music bith like an adder. When the composer has no other idea he takes two innocent minor seconds in different keys and incites them to mortal combat. And his themes are oftentimes reminiscent of better thoughts by other masters. It is strange indeed to hear from time to time curdled "Carman," battered Berlioz or twisted "Tristan." After listening to the work one feels as if he has heard the song of an unripe persimmon.

But in Athens, where they are ever seeking something new, they love this symphony and must hear it twice. Thrice blessed is he who can revel in this course of sour sounds. Common New Yorkers will perhaps continue to prefer the old fashioned warblings of Mozart and Beethoven. Even "Ein Heldenleben" becomes the croon of a cradle song beside this.

But, as already noted, it was beautifully played. Such openness, solidity, transparency and the whole comes to a grand finale even from this great Boston orchestra, while the clarity of enunciation of the themes and their repetitions in the course of the development of the performance was incomparably fine.

The soloist of the evening was Mme. Olga Samaroff, pianist, who played with the orchestra the Schumann concerto, which was a smooth, fluent, colorful and unpoetic interpretation. Mme. Samaroff seemed to have little feeling for the romantic content of the work, or if she had, she could not convey it in a variety of accent adequate to its emotional content. The concert closed with Tchaikowsky's delightful "Nut Cracker" suite.

NEWS OF PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Many Changes Announced at the Shubert House.

The Shuberts announce various changes to take place at their New York city playhouses shortly after Christmas Day.

The first New York presentation of Clyde Fitch's last serious drama, "The City," will take place at the Lyric Theatre, on Monday, December 27. On the same date F. C. Whitney's production of Strauss' opera, "The Chocolate Soldier," will move from the Lyric to the Casino. Sam Bernard in "The Girl and the Wizard" will then necessarily have to leave the Casino and will inaugurate his tour with a week at the West End Theatre before coming to the Metropolitan.

Owing to the success of Forbes-Robertson in "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" at the Lyric Theatre, it is thought that the unwillingness of Miss Elliott to disturb this run, the Shuberts have been obliged to find accommodations at another playhouse for this distinguished actress-manager's own New York season. It has, therefore, been arranged that Miss Elliott shall open her season in her production of "The Girl and the Wizard" on Monday, January 3, at Daly's Theatre.

DODD, MEAD & CO.

AND COMPANY'S RETAIL BOOK STORE

You will find our book store inviting and most conveniently located. We sell the books of all publishers, English and American.

NEW BOOKS OF THE DAY
STANDARD SETS
PLAIN cloth and fine leather bindings.
CHOICE SINGLE VOLUMES, exquisitely bound.
RARE COLLECTED SETS, Etc., Etc.

DODD, MEAD & CO.
Fifth Avenue & 35th St.

AT THE METROPOLITAN OPERA.

Novelties Next Week There and at the New Theatre.

The two interesting features of the next week's work of the Metropolitan Opera Company will be the production of "La Fille de Mme. Angot" at the New Theatre on Tuesday night and the first performance this season of "Siegfried" at the Metropolitan Opera House on Thursday evening. Edmond Clement is to sing *Angar Frou* in the former, while the other characters will be in the hands of Mmes. Alda, Maubourg, Lievin and Heliane, and MM. Gianoli-Galetti and Devoux. In the cast of "Siegfried," which is to begin at 7:30 o'clock, there will be Mmes. Gadskian and Homer and MM. Burian, Whitehill and Reiss. "Otello" will be sung on Monday, "La Gioconda" on Wednesday, "Tosca," with Miss Farrar and MM. Martin and Scotti in the cast, on Friday; and at the Saturday matinee Mme. Lipowska will appear in "La Traviata" with MM. Bonci and Forsell. In the evening Mme. Fremstad will make her belated appearance in "Lohengrin." With her will appear MM. Jörn and Goritz.

CHICAGO OPERA PLANS.

Practically All the Capital Stock of the Company Subscribed.

Chicago, Dec. 9.—Practically all of the \$500,000 capital stock of the proposed Chicago Grand Opera Company has been subscribed by Chicago capitalists, it was announced to-day.

The lease of the Auditorium has been signed and little remains to get things into shape for the first season.

The project practically will be a Chicago affair from start to finish is evidenced by the fact that so far but three New Yorkers have taken stock. They are W. K. Vanderbilt, Otto Kahn and Clarence Mackay.

A meeting of stockholders will be held next week to elect a board of directors. It is understood that none but Chicago men, with one exception, will be on the board.

Andrew Dippel, director of the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York, will be the one outsider.

HERMANN KAULBACH DEAD.

Noted German Genre Painter Passes Away in Munich.

Hermann Kaulbach, the well known German genre painter, is dead in Munich. He was born in that city in 1846 and was a son of Wilhelm von Kaulbach, who was an artist of celebrity.

Kaulbach attended the University of Munich for a short time, then studied art under Piloty. In 1868 he became royal professor.

Among his principal works are "The Children's Confession," "Mozart's Last Days," "Lucretia Dances Before Pope Alexander VI.," "The Coronation of Saint Elizabeth," "From the Life of a Court Fool," "The Falcoune," "Opera Cycle," "The End of the World," "Between Two Worlds" and "A Sword Will Pierce Your Soul."

His paintings of children won special commendation. He received medals at the Chicago world's fair, the Vienna world's fair of 1873, a royal gold medal in Berlin in 1886 and medals at the Munich international art exhibit in 1901. The picture which won the last named medal was called "Orphaned Hearts."

OBITUARY.

William Henry Harrison Williams, who had been a customer of the firm since 1880, died yesterday at his home in New Rochelle, aged 73. He was born in Brookfield, Conn., where he will be buried on Saturday.

Harper's Books

Seven English Cities

By W. D. HOWELLS

Alert, sensitive, abandoning himself to the environment, yet never transgressing artistic restraint, Mr. Howells offers his comments with the conversational freedom of an ordinary traveller. Passing through towns and villages, along old roads and over well-known haunts, or discovering some inviting, unfamiliar spot, one thing the author does always—catches the spirit of the place and mirrors it deftly and brilliantly.

Higgins—A Man's Christian

By NORMAN DUNCAN

Higgins is the lumberjack's "sky pilot," and he is too, one living without a restraint to brute passion and force. Higgins passes to and fro among his folk like Grenfell of Labrador. Norman Duncan has written a record of human good that will bring a tear to the eye and a quickened beat to the heart.

The Valor of Ignorance

By Homer Lea

Its object is to show our unpreparedness for war, and discuss a plan by which the Japanese might seize and hold the Philippines, Hawaii, Alaska and California.

A Hunter's Camp-Fires

By Edward J. House

The animals hunted are moose, walrus, rhinoceros, elephant, giraffe, antelope, grizzly, mountain goat, caribou, etc. Profusely illustrated from photographs and maps.

English Spelling and Spelling Reform

By Thomas R. Lounsbury

The book is for the average intelligent reader; it is especially intended to remove the "unintelligent opposition of the intelligent."

The Human Way

By Louise Collier Willcox

These essays will compose a volume of human wisdom and literary quality which we can exchange with English for the essays of Love, Dickinson and A. C. Benson.

In the Forbidden Land

By A. Henry Savage Landor

Noteworthy as having been the first to lift the veil from "the Unknown Land." (New One-Volume Edition.)

History, Memoirs, Literature

Home Letters of General Sherman

Edited by N. R. DE WOLF HOWE \$2.00 net; postpaid, \$2.20

"No one can read them without being conscious of electrical contact with a nature of exceptional strength and contagious energy. The wartime correspondence is truly thrilling, though couched in the cool, measured language characteristic of the great general."—The Outlook.

The Relations of Spain and the U. S.—Diplomacy

By RERR ADMIRAL F. E. SHADWICK \$4.00 net; postpaid, \$4.40

He takes up the relations of Spain and the United States from the first time they came in contact and throws new light on the Louisiana Purchase, the trouble over Florida, the events of the Grant Administration and the Cuban Question; tracing fully, in a clear and comprehensive manner, the incidents which led up to the Spanish War.

Landscape Painting

By SIRGE HARRISON Illus. \$1.50 net; postpaid, \$1.65

"It is the highest praise for this book to say that students and the general public will find in it material of as much value to one class of readers as another."—New York Times.

American Prose Masters

By W. G. BROWNELL \$1.50 net; postpaid, \$1.65

"Apart from the always delightful suggestive gleaming in phrase and word, the reader gains a fine sense of the critic's perspective, its range, its accuracy, its evolution, for wise and multifarious observation. It is of no slight importance that these writers should be weighed in the balance held by a hand so strong and delicate."—Editorial in N. Y. Times Review.

Success in Music and How It Is Won

By HENRY T. FINEK, with a chapter by PADEREWSKI \$2.00 net; postpaid, \$2.20

"In this inspiring, hopeful, and most entertaining book he points the road to success to every young person with genuine musical talent."—Boston Globe.

Latter Day Problems

By J. LAURENCE LAUGHLIN \$1.50 net; postpaid, \$1.65

"There is no writer on modern economic conditions who makes the subject more alive and pertinent to every man's own life than Professor Laughlin."—N. Y. Commercial.

The Mystery of Education

By BARRETT WENDELL \$1.25 net; postpaid, \$1.35

"A volume as readable as it is thoughtful and as human as it is frankly academic."—Boston Transcript.

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

Average Daily Sales 2,000 Copies

The Best Selling Book in the United States

UNANIMOUS PRAISE EVERYWHERE

The Calling of Dan Matthews

By HAROLD BELL WRIGHT, Author of "The Shepherd of the Hills" "That Printer of Udell's"

"The story has a strong purpose."—New York Sun.

"Contemporary with present day thought."—Baltimore American.

"A very dramatic and interesting story."—Chicago Journal.

"It is a picture that has been seen time and again."—Philadelphia North American.

"The story is strong and wholesome, sincere and uplifting in ethical purpose, delightful in character-drawing and general literary craftsmanship."—Chicago Daily News.

"It complies with Zola's definition of a novel: 'A corner in life seen through a temperament.' This corner happens to be typical of the four corners of the United States, and the temperament through which we see it gives an honest reflection."—Duluth News-Tribune.

Illustrations in Color by Keller. 12mo. Cloth. \$1.50

At All Book Stores

PUBLISHERS—THE BOOK SUPPLY COMPANY

230-232 MONROE STREET, CHICAGO

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.