

THE WATCHER PRODUCED

MISS MAYNARD'S PLAY AT THE COMEDY THEATRE.

Catherine Coullis and Percy Haswell in the Chief Women's Parts in the New Production—Thurlow Bergen's Skillful Acting a Feature of the Piece.

One does not have to call oneself a spiritualist to believe that no human being ever really dies. One does not even have to be a religionist. It is almost a commonplace that the influence of no human character can ever really fade quite into nothingness. It is like dropping a stone into a pool. The little concentric waves formed by its dropping go out from the point of contact into the furthest margin of the pool, and if the pool were only illimitable, as is the universe, it would be easy to imagine them going out and out forever.

It is probable that most persons who read these words are conscious of the influence of some fine, sweet, gentle personality which has now passed beyond the limits of this visible world forever. Though the personality has passed, its influence, its essence, after all the real and most vital thing about it, remains perhaps all the more potent because disembodied and glorified with all the radiance which memory is accustomed to shed upon the objects of its regard. Into the warp and woof of one character this influence is woven, and from that character is transmitted to others that come within its sphere, and so on and on until it is hard to say just where the original impetus stops, if indeed it stops at all. In this sense, indeed, there is no death and can be none.

Considerations something like these have doubtless occurred to every thoughtful person, and it is very likely that they were in the mind of Miss Cora Maynard when she set out to write her play "The Watcher," which was first seen by New York audience last evening at the Comedy Theatre. But if she had intended at first to deal with the immortality of character she finished by trying to treat of the deathlessness of personality. Her position as it found final expression upon the stage was that the dead do not pass into nothingness or even forgetfulness, but that they do not even pass to some far sphere where the earth and its little things become nothing to them, but that they remain conscious of all that goes on in the world that they have left, that they will come back again, that they will give their good deeds still have power to give their joy.

This, of course, is a far more materialistic theory than the one which is usually accepted. It can never be anything more than a theory, and it is certain that its exposition upon the stage can scarcely ever be anything but arbitrary. At least it takes an arbitrary part in Miss Maynard's play. Nor does it help the author's case at all that she has chosen to mix mysticism with melodrama.

The story she tells is of a married man who is a bit of a cad. He is a gambler and keeps getting in deeper and deeper, ultimately cheating at cards in order to regain his losses. His wife has been before her marriage the mistress of a man whom she declined to marry because the man she did marry had money while her lover had none. After her husband's death she marries a man who is a gambler and keeps getting in deeper and deeper, ultimately cheating at cards in order to regain his losses. His wife has been before her marriage the mistress of a man whom she declined to marry because the man she did marry had money while her lover had none. After her husband's death she marries a man who is a gambler and keeps getting in deeper and deeper, ultimately cheating at cards in order to regain his losses.

The dramatist wishes us to accept the idea that the husband believed the other man lock the door so that his advances to the wife might be undisturbed, although he well knew that the husband was due to return home at any moment. This absurdity destroyed any effect which it might have had as a study of the wise have had for intelligent observers. Meantime the influence of a dead mother has been hovering over the household in the innocent sense of the word, and in the end the cad of a husband feels it too, at the moment he is about to blow his brains out. In a twinkling his mother is to his mind with him again. Her presence is a relief, and she is the cause of his recovery. The influence of the dead mother, the "watcher," who looks down upon them unceasingly from what appears to be a heaven above.

It may well be imagined that any effort to combine so mystic a theme with the realism of a New York flat, with a comic servant girl and much pistol play, would be a difficult task. It has been too difficult for Miss Maynard. Her play shows some sense for the dramatic but little for the probabilities, though it is but fair to say that the piece was received with many demonstrations of favor on the part of the audience. Miss Catherine Coullis played the part of the wicked wife. Nobody could take seriously the passion of the woman for a man whom she had deliberately abandoned because he was not rich. The part was incredible, but Miss Coullis played it better than it deserved. Miss Percy Haswell again played competence and personal beauty as the innocent sister—and not much more. John Emerson impersonated the caddish husband rather naturally, but Thurlow Bergen, as the man who lock the door, was rather, gave far and away the best performance of the evening. He displayed a fine sense of repose, a capacity for a certain amount of suggestion and at moments indicated the possession of something like real power. Marion Ballou got many laughs as the servant girl.

Funeral of Lotta Faust. Funeral services for Miss Lotta Faust, who died in Dr. Bull's Sanitarium on Tuesday morning, were held in the Stephen Mackay Chapel, 171 Eighth avenue at 12:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon. The services were conducted by the Rev. John J. Young, D. D., pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Christopher street.

Charles Emerson Cook Bankrupt. Charles Emerson Cook, theatrical agent of 116 West Thirty-ninth street, who for a long time was David Belasco's general press agent, has filed a petition in bankruptcy with liabilities \$12,971 and assets, consisting of cash in bank \$10 and two shares of stock of the Charles Emerson Cook Theatrical Company, par value \$200. Among the creditors are the DeMille Company, \$600; Alice Kaiser, \$250; E. H. Pupp, \$500; all for royalties. E. P. Pupp, \$310; Katherine Emmet, \$100; Norma Mitchell, \$100; Elizabeth Murray, \$100; H. C. Husted, \$257; Elliott Dexter, all for services.

The Seagoers. L. M. Howland, United States Treasury agent at Paris, arrived yesterday by the American liner "New York" too late to attend the marriage of his daughter to Magistrate Frederick Kernochan. Other passengers by the "New York" were Emily Egan, who is here to visit Ada Rehan; Mrs. Arthur Lee, daughter of Senator Davis of West Virginia; the Marquis de Gerni and Mrs. M. S. McCullum.

THE "RING" PERFORMANCES.

The First Human Drama Attracts an Audience of Large Size.

The human beings of the Wagnerian trilogy began their appearances yesterday afternoon at the Metropolitan Opera House when the second representation of "Der Ring des Nibelungen" took place. It has long been known that "Die Walkure" had a special popularity of its own, but doubtless the managers and directors and other wise men who guide the Metropolitan through the wild waters of artistic production rubbed their eyes with amazement when they saw the audience. It was one of the largest seen in the theatre in the afternoon in some considerable time.

The performance was one which disclosed with eloquence the significance of the drama. No one took part in it who has not been seen and heard in the same rôle before, but all experienced opera goers are aware that sometimes the spirit of a work enters into each individual impersonation as it does not at other times, and that the results are inspiring. Such was the case yesterday. Doubtless all the artists were stimulated by the demonstration of public interest in the representation of Wagner's amazing tragedy and gave their best, while the orchestra supported all with a flood of brilliant and sonorous tones.

Mme. Gadski as Brünnhilde. Mrs. Homer as Fricka and Mme. Freestad as Sieglinde repeated impersonations which call for no new description at this time. Mr. Somoer's Wotan was made known last season and it once more assumed a notable place in the general picture. Earl Burrian's Siegmund, like some of his other impersonations, lacks poetic charm, but it has the merit of fine musical quality and a real dramatic intensity. Mr. Hincley is one of the darkest, gloomiest and most sombre Brünnhildes known to the stage. It cannot be possible that any one is sorry when Wotan leaves him and the chorus of Valkyries in this season's performances of "Die Walkure" is particularly good. The stage management is generally commendable and the presentation of the drama is the whole worthy of a festival series.

NEW RUSSIAN MUSIC HEARD.

Rachmaninoff's "Island of the Dead" Conducted by Composer.

Sergei Rachmaninoff figured last night at the Russian Symphony Society's concert at Carnegie Hall as composer, conductor and pianist. He directed the first New York performance of his symphonic poem, "The Island of the Dead," and his announced duties included also the playing of the solo part in his second piano concerto, already known here. The remainder of last night's programme comprised Tchaikowsky's fantasy overture, "Romeo and Juliet," and Arensky's variations for strings on the theme of a Tchaikowsky part song, "Christ when a Child a Garden Made." Modest Altschuler conducted everything but the new symphonic poem.

"The Island of the Dead," Rachmaninoff's latest work, was confessedly inspired by Arnold Böcklin's well known picture. The island in the painting rises abruptly from a calm sea under a windless sky. The solemn stillness of the place is enhanced by sombre cypress trees. A boat approaches the harbor, bearing a coffin, beside which stands a figure in white robes. The remoteness and the profound peace of the vision set upon canvas by the Swiss painter have been the subject of much appreciative writing.

Rachmaninoff in his symphonic poem did not make a musical paraphrase of Böcklin's picture. He began by suggesting a mood as sombre as the mysterious island itself, but this he gave place to dramatic episodes, now poignant and now turbulent. The composer apparently used the picture as a point of departure, returning to the contemplation of its mournful beauty only after wanderings far afield.

The symphonic poem might in fact have stood on its own qualities without the picture, but the music is so well adapted to the picture that it is sufficient evidence of a musical pattern, including a persistent and effective employment of the "Dies Ira" and there were certain things under the dominating baton of Mr. Altschuler which were of horridous power. The score is colorful, without orchestral extravagance, and throughout its considerable length, the composer's earnest sincerity is manifest. The Russian visitor showed here, as he is reported to have done in Boston, that he is a conductor capable of getting what he wants. The orchestra has seldom been heard to such advantage. Mr. Rachmaninoff was warmly applauded.

The performance of Tchaikowsky's "Romeo and Juliet" was also commendable, returning in responding readily to Mr. Altschuler's bidding.

DO A THACKERAY PLAY.

Greater Club Actors in the Resurrected Sketch "Reading a Poem."

They had a "first night" last night at the Greater Club, of a little sketch of William Makepeace Thackeray's called "Reading a Poem." The occasion was the general meeting of the club, which attracted members from as far away as Baltimore and Boston. Afterward, there was a private view of many Whistler etchings, for the Club is publishing to-day a volume of the complete etchings of Whistler, which E. G. Kennedy, a member of the club has been compiling during the last ten years.

William F. Havemeyer, the president of the club, made an address, and the treasurer reported the assets of the club to be over \$15,000. Samuel P. Avery, R. T. Haines Halsey, Mr. Havemeyer, Archer M. Huntington, Edward G. Kennedy and Henry McLaughlin painter were elected members of the club.

According to the program, "Reading a Poem," by Michael Angelo Titmarsh, was lost in a scarce volume of the weekly paper, "British and Foreign," some years ago and republished by the "Settle of Odd Volumes," in London, afterwards being privately reprinted by a member of the Greater Club. It is a satire on the editor, Charles Dickens, and the literary aspirants of Thackeray's early days. "Lord Dudley" sells a volume of poems for £1,000 to Mr. Boyle, a publisher, after a bit of shrewd bargaining, aided and abetted by his body servant Mr. Yellicott, who impersonates a rival publisher in an adjoining room. Then he proceeds to compose the first poem, "An Ode to a Flowerpot," which is published in "The Standard" and two rival literary "organs" of the school of lambasting and flattery of the period, who have called to see his lordship.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Margaret Deland in a recent speech clearly expressed her opinion of women's ideas on reform. "Calculated to reduce the average suffragette to tears," was the way some one described it. Women, Mrs. Deland declares, have a disregard for law which is appalling. They in effect make merry with it. Their ideas of reform are superficial and emotional and ill-considered. The abolition of the canteen is cited as an illustration of the superiority of temperance over total abstinence. Women, she asserts further, are too prone to believe that they can alter human nature by legislation and make people good by writing things down in the statute books.

The question of immortality, which Henry James declared recently was to him the most interesting in the world, is to be presented in a new book by a number of eminent persons, including Mr. James. The chapters of this book have been appearing serially in "Harper's Bazar," and among the distinguished persons who will tell the world that they believe will follow this life are Mr. Howells, Mr. James, Mr. Alden, John Bigelow, Julia Ward Howe, Col. Thomas W. Higginson and others. "In After Days" is the title chosen for the book.

Mr. Elibu Vodder in the February World's Work tells of his Florentine days. His departure from the Tuscan city he describes thus: "From my studio where I had packed my pictures and small belongings the last thing I remember was wafting a kiss to a pretty girl at a window opposite and seeing the wave of a handkerchief with perfume a tear in it. And I left Eden. The world was all before me, but as to the where I had no choice; so I followed the Arno to where it is lost in the sunset and at Leghorn embarked for home."

"Airships in Peace and War," to be published this month, is the latest addition to aerial literature. It is written by Mr. R. P. Hearne and is a second edition of Mr. Hearne's "Aerial Warfare," obtaining its new title from the immense progress which has lately been made in the use of the airship as a harbinger of peace. The new material in the volume includes descriptions of all the more prominent aeroplanes of 1909 and makes some interesting forecasts about the development of aeroplanes in the future. Mr. Hearne has had the good fortune to have had a talk with Mr. G. W. Wright about the military trials, and Mr. Wright's own views of his feat and its results are cited.

Warwick Depping has had much inspiration in realizing the medieval atmosphere of his latest romance, "The Red Saint." He wrote the story at an old farmhouse at Battle, Sussex, not far from the famous abbey founded by William the Conqueror. Mr. Depping studied to be a physician and practised medicine for a year, giving up that profession for literature, which he finds more congenial. Medieval themes are of special interest to him and have been presented in "Uther and Igraine" and other books. When not occupied with writing Mr. Depping spends his time at out of door games, gardening and carpentering.

The prevention of disease and the problem of keeping the well man well is the chief interest of the day and a new work on this subject will appear in the spring from the pen of Dr. William S. Sadler of Chicago. The book is called "The Science of Living; or the Art of Keeping Well." The matter is entirely scientific and practical and avoids all fads and dietetic notions and delusions. Dr. Sadler covers a great deal of ground that is usually untouched by writers on health and hygiene and he presents scientific facts concerning health which will enable the average reader to form an opinion of his own as to his own manner of living.

Quiller-Couch, author of "True Tilda," "The Mayor of Troy" and other books, is best known on this side of the water as a writer of stories, but in England he is thought of more as an essayist and critic and as a poet. In his home town of Fowey he takes a most enthusiastic interest in all that goes on about him. He is justice of the peace, rear admiral of the yacht club, a leading spirit in the mercantile association and the outdoor sports and the Troy town band. His popularity has been summed up by one of his Cornish neighbors as follows: "They'm many of us could tell you that Mr. Quiller-Couch is the only gent in Fowey."

Dr. William Edgar Geil, author of "The Great Wall of China," is now leading another scientific expedition through China. He writes to his publishers: "One of the principal objects of my return to China is to make a study of the Americans and Europeans living there. I want to ascertain as far as I can just what influence Europeans and Americans have had on their latter day history, whether those Americans who have settled in China are really representative of our country and whether they have left any impression upon the Chinese people. I shall visit every province of China, travelling from end to end of the vast country and searching for new material by which I hope to make Americans understand more fully what a remarkable and interesting country the Celestial Kingdom really is."

Rear Admiral French E. Chadwick, author of "The Relations of the United States with Spain," was appointed to the Naval Academy from West Virginia in 1881. After graduating at the academy he was attached to the Marblehead in pursuit of the Confederate steamer Florida and Tallahassee. He was Admiral Sampson's chief of staff during the Spanish-American war and commanded the cruiser New York. He took part in the most important engagements in the Atlantic during the war and was advanced five numbers for eminent and conspicuous conduct in battle.

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Sharp Reply from Wingate OBJECTS TO A FIGHT AGAINST A WOMAN TEACHER On the Ground That She Hasn't Agreed With Other Women in the Equal Pay Controversy—Time, He Says, That Free Speech Should Rule in Schools.

Correspondence between Gen. George W. Wingate of the Board of Education and the "committee of 100 on the improvement of conditions in the schools" concerning Gen. Wingate's support of Miss Ruth Granger's candidacy for district superintendent in place of the late Miss Evangeline Whitney was made public yesterday.

The letter from the committee is dated January 24, and is signed "Helen Hoy Greeley, chairman pro tem." After commending Gen. Wingate for his "broad-mindedness" in earlier questions, the letter goes on to say that the committee assumes that Gen. Wingate feels that the appointment of Miss Granger would satisfy the cry of the teachers and the women citizens of the greater city that this vacancy be filled by a representative member of their sex, and hastens to apprise Gen. Wingate of certain facts regarding our attitude toward Miss Granger, which we trust will materially change your viewpoint in this matter."

The latter speaks of Miss Granger's opposition to the equal pay fight and declares that "it would be unwise and inadvisable in the extreme to place in a position of authority over a large body of women one of their number who has stood against what they consider their best interests, who has publicly allied herself with the forces opposed to these interests, and who has undoubtedly aroused bitter resentment and much personal antagonism."

In his reply Gen. Wingate says that he thinks it proper to appoint a woman to the place if it can be found sufficiently competent," and adds that he knows Miss Granger because her school is in his district and that he has watched her work for eight years. He knows personally, he says, that she is "an unusually capable woman, an experienced teacher and a successful principal; that she possesses remarkable executive ability, has a thorough knowledge of the needs of the schools and a dignified and charming personality." Gen. Wingate continues:

You do not question in any way her qualifications for the position. But merely insist that I shall not support her because she has said that she was not in favor of "equal pay"; that is, of the proposition that the women teachers, who got their appointments because they offered to work for less than men would do, should have their salaries raised to the rates paid the men at an annual expense to the taxpayers of about \$8,000,000 to \$11,000,000 without giving a place in a school to another part-time child. I am astonished that such educated and refined women as I believe compose your organization should take such a stand. To my mind it is worse than if the objection was that of creed or race, because it is utterly selfish. It squarely presents the issue that any teacher who does not associate measures that will be peculiarly profitable to a class of teachers who have formed a numerous and powerful organization is to be debared from merited promotion.

I think that it is time that this was publicly understood. I certainly think it will not receive public support, but on the contrary, that it will and should receive public condemnation. I shall not permit such an argument to influence my actions as a member of the board. I told Miss Strachan recently that while I disapproved of many things connected with the fight she has made for "equal pay" she has done no more than was her right, and that as I knew she had been a good district superintendent I should not permit my personal feeling as to her conduct in a matter outside her official duties in the schools to prevent my voting for her. This I know is the view of many members of the board. Yet you and other friends of Miss Strachan desire to "boycott" a woman teacher who does not agree with you because, forsooth, her expression of her opinion has as you write, "caused bitter resentment and much personal antagonism."

I cannot help but thinking that if there are a large number of teachers who entertain these feelings toward another teacher because she differs from them upon a matter that touches their pocket it is time that they understood that in the schools as well as in other places teachers have the right of free thought and free speech and that the members of the Board of Education will not be influenced in their promotion upon any other consideration than their merits as teachers.

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