

THE WOMAN AT THE REPUBLIC

DAVID BELASCO PRODUCES A NEW PLAY.

His Drama Deals With Political Life in Washington—Another Woman on the Back—Drama of a Telephone Central—The Really Interesting Thing.

David Belasco's first contribution to the New York stage in the present season was offered last night at the Republic theatre, which has suffered—as have the other playhouses in Forty-second street—some abridgment as to its facade. Mr. Belasco's incomparable gifts as a man of the theatre were last night expended on "The Woman," by W. C. De Mille. This history repeats itself and once again the dignity that arose with Mr. Belasco and the senior De Mille recalled in the union of the manager and dramatist with the son of his one-time colleague.

Mr. Belasco in accepting this play for performance is in line with his efforts with such works as "The Eastward Ho!" and "The Convert." Augustin Daly ignored the progress of the drama during the course of years before his death. The later manager of A. W. Pinero made no appeal to him. H. A. Jones—he was revolutionary in his comparison with Blumenthal and Kallenberg—left him cold, and Henrik Ibsen did not exist for him. Such indifference to the newest development of the art, which was his own as well as the playwright's, could not fail to diminish a manager's importance to his generation.

David Belasco is a stage romanticist never one lived. There is not a trick in the business that is not at the end of his masterful fingers. But he is alert enough to see that all his powers would be unavailing if repeatedly exercised on material that has passed out of style. So he gratifies his audience and retains a hold on the public that expects from him the best that American theatres produce by keeping abreast of the dramatic times.

The audience at the Republic last night found Mr. Belasco's concession to what may be called the young element in the theatre to lie in the fact that "The Woman" is a political play and that it is with the insurgent but fighting against the wiles of the machine politicians that the sympathies of the audience, the producer and the playwright lie. The drama, which is in three acts, passes in the office of one of the smaller Washington hotels and in apartments upstairs.

The central figure in interest is not the insurgent hero, his considering antagonists, but the woman whose reputation in a deal here is the real heart of the telephone operator in the hotel. "The Woman," as the first act shows, begins as all political dramas do. A bit is about to come before Congress. Opposed to its passage is Matthew Scindler, who sees in it only a discredit to the party. His principal opponents are Mark Robertson of New York and Jim Blake. Their effort is to blacken their opponent's character until his influence is destroyed and their prevails. They remember that he was once involved in a scandal.

But who was the woman? They cannot recall her name. Without that knowledge they are powerless to injure him. It is that name they must learn. There seems a way when Scindler goes to the telephone to warn her. To learn the number he has called is to identify his partner in the scandal.

It is not long before the audience discovers that this hunted woman is the wife of Mark Robertson and the daughter of Jim Blake. It is her husband who is seeking, with her father's aid, to drag her through their political mud, and it is her brother who has been making love to the girl at the telephone of the hotel. So this girl determines that the politicians shall never learn from her the New York number called by Scindler, whatever they may do. And her order is executed.

None of the shrinking ladies on the popular rack past and to come, are destined to be put upon it more thoroughly than she is. Nothing shakes her determination, however, to keep the number a secret. Her father had been an insignificant politician and suffered through the machine which these men meant to ruin. But she is a woman who is willing to undergo all consequences. The woman in question begs Blake, her father, and Robertson, her husband, to cease the inquiry. They refuse. Mr. Belasco has made it plain that this woman so near to them should be interested in the case.

One of the inquisitors suspects. To her husband and father she repeats his story. Slowly the two men realize that there must be silence now if the woman means to them is to be protected. There might have been only gloom to follow this silence. Mr. Belasco has made it plain that this woman so near to them should be interested in the case.

Mr. Belasco's skill as a producer, to use the stage slang, did wonders for the first act of the play. He brought before the audience with photographic quality the life of a small hotel office, and his choice of politicians gathered in one corner, the telephone operator at work and the miscellaneous rest of the place. There was no lack of interest in her. There were less concern for the affairs of her slightly unworthy political husband. A character in the group at this instant changed the attention of the audience to Scindler, who in this progress the play proved to be only a theatrical silhouette who served his purpose, as the other figures did, in building up a dramatic play for the end of the act.

When the curtain fell on this act all that was of humanity on the stage seemed to be the faithful telephone girl, who for theatrical rather than probable reasons had decided to hold her tongue. She kept her unique position to the end of the play. Not another character, with one exception, had made the least impression on the spectators in the course of the play.

There was in Jim Blake a type, familiar to our ears and already overdone in fiction, dramatic and otherwise, of a professional politician and John Coble's acting added to it that it can scarcely be overestimated. The rest of the actors were uninterestingly uninteresting. The manager of fat politicians are not absorbing in the least. The only character of greater curiosity as to what befalls her is the forgetful spouse.

Mary Nash imparts to the telephone girl anxiety and a pathetic resolution which made the audience in default of a better subject open its heart to her. There was, unluckily, no other object of her sympathies in Mr. de Mille's menagerie of five lives. The play was a play and an experience of technique that called a certain interest to his climax. "The Woman" without Mr. Belasco's touch would have lacked any claims to dramatic interest. It is a question of the matter stands whether it is worth remembering.

WESTCHESTER FAIR OPENS.

First Day's Attention Divided Between Soft-soap and Prize Exhibits.

WHITE PLAINS, Sept. 19.—Visitors at the opening of the annual Westchester county fair at White Plains fairgrounds today found several tents near the midway in charge of delegates of the Westchester County Woman's Suffrage Association, who addressed the crowds. They attracted much attention.

Several big automobiles draped with streamers bearing the words "The Woman Voter" and "Votes for Women" and containing many pretty girls rode about the fairgrounds, giving away literature. A nice-looking young woman shouted through a megaphone, "Come on, come over to the women's tent!"

Mrs. Jessie Garrett Finch of New York spoke on woman suffrage. Mrs. Walston Hill Brown, president of the Metropolitan Auxiliary of the New York Child Labor Committee and the daughter of the late Robert G. Ingersoll, and her two children, Eva and Robert, rode to the fairgrounds in a big limousine and immediately went to the women's suffrage tent. She carried an armful of circulars and many lead pencils for the use of signers to the suffrage petition. Others in the tent were Mrs. William L. Goff of Bronxville, Mrs. Bishop W. C. M. Goff, Mrs. Henry Villard of Dobbs Ferry, Mrs. Burrill, Mrs. Pierce Bailey and Mrs. Walston Brown.

The fair this year is better than ever. Many millionaire farmers have entered cattle, vegetables and flowers. Oliver Harriman and George Fordyce Lethbride, who own a farm, have exhibited. A. H. Smith of the New York Central Railroad Company has entered nine foot hogs, prize winning dorset sheep and cattle. Several other New Yorkers who have country homes in Westchester also have entered, and the contests for blue ribbons are keen.

The horse show will start on Wednesday afternoon. There are sixty classes and a large number of high steppers have been entered.

Gov. and Mrs. Dix will attend the horse show on Thursday afternoon as the guests of Mr. Oliver Harriman. Gov. and Mrs. Dix will spend Wednesday as the guests of William H. Catlin of Rye, the State Highway Commissioner. On Thursday they will come over the road to a four-in-hand to White Plains. This day night will be entertained at a reception at the Knollwood Country Club.

WAVE CAPSIZED HER.

Miss Ormond, Who Sings, Upset on the Kaiser Wilhelm Red Cross.

Miss Lila Ormond, concert singer, who arrived yesterday by the North German Lloyd liner Kaiser Wilhelm Red Cross, was on the promenade deck talking nonchalantly on Saturday morning when a big wave struck the ship. The orchestra had just struck up "The Star Spangled Banner" and Miss Ormond arose, first depositing her soup on the side of her stateroom chair. The wave hit at that moment and Miss Ormond fell into the sea, spoiling the quarter deck of her gown.

Miss Ormond said that her manager, Mr. J. H. Lutz, had been saying that there would be no chance for her in the newspapers as the French lady who captivated a king had prompted all the space. This is not why she fell into the sea.

Miss Ormond will sing at the Maine festival at Bangor on October 13 and at Portland on October 17.

ADMIRAL CHING IN ENGLISH.

Answers a Toast in Our Tongue Without Notes at Luncheon in His Honor.

Admiral Ching Pih Kwang, commander of the Chinese cruiser Hai Chi, who was the guest of the American Asiatic Association at a luncheon spread in the Engineers Club in West Fortieth street at 1 o'clock yesterday, spoke in clear English without notes when he arose to answer the toast of the Chinese Navy. Rear Admiral E. H. Lutz, commander of the United States navy yard, who followed the Chinese Admiral in the final formal toast of the occasion, spoke from notes when he responded to the toast to the service which he represented.

About fifty members of the American Asiatic Association sat at the tables in the club with the Chinese Admiral and his officers as their guests. Those who were at the table besides Admiral Ching were Secretary Chang and Lieut. Liu from the cruiser, Isidor Straus, Commander Cooper, Rear Admiral Lutz, and the staff of the American Asiatic Association. Both Loo, the president of the American Asiatic Association, presided.

After toasts to the President and the infant Emperor of China had been given, Admiral Ching called upon the guest of honor to respond to the toast to the Chinese navy. This the Admiral did without notes. He refused to accept a pretty compliment to the courtesy of New Yorkers, acknowledged with gratitude the reception to himself and his officers in our waters and closed with as neat a hands-on-the-table as the other guests. He heard in these parts, even at a dinner of the Pilgrims Society.

The Admiral went on a little sight-seeing tour of upper New York after the luncheon was over.

CANCER HOSPITAL'S NEW HOME.

St. Rose's to Have a \$100,000 Building at Jackson and Front Streets.

The plans for the new home of St. Rose's Free Hospital for Incurable Cancer were filed yesterday with Building Superintendent Rudolph P. Miller. It will be located on the northwest corner of Jackson and Front streets, directly opposite Corlies Hook Park, almost at the waterfront. It will be a five-story edifice, 100 feet wide and 100 feet long. The main entrance will be on Jackson street and the facade will be of brick with trimmings of terra cotta and marble. The upper part of the corner of the building will represent a church and in it, at the fourth and fifth floors, will be built the chapel. Adjoining the chapel on the fourth floor will be an entirely new feature in hospitals, a funeral home. There will be sun parlors at the first, second and third stories on the Jackson street side of the building, with a large reception ward and a number of private rooms scattered throughout the building, which will be absolutely fireproof.

The servants of Relief for Cancer is the owner of the building, Mrs. J. M. Hawthorne Lathrop, who is a daughter of John Hawthorne, the author, is the president of the society. James W. O'Connor, the architect, is in charge of the construction of the building at \$100,000.

NEWS OF PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Mrs. Fiske Back From Her Vacation For Rehearsals.

Mrs. Fiske returned from her holiday in the Adirondacks yesterday to begin rehearsals to-day of "The New Marriage," Langdon Mitchell's comedy, at the Lyceum Theatre.

Gabriel Calderon and a car arrived in New York yesterday on the Niagara from Havre. Calderon is chauffeur for Mme. Simone, and the car is also of the French variety, intended for the comfort of the Paris celebrity while she is in the United States. She was seen to smile and to over slightly in advance of the actress in order that all may be in readiness upon her arrival on the Oceanic Wednesday.

Word came by cable to Charles Frohm yesterday that Miss Pauline Chase is to play Ana, the leading feminine role in "Man and Superman," with Robert Loraine in the male part, at the Criterion Theatre, London, beginning September 26.

HEARD IN HOTEL CORRIDORS.

SCHOOL TO FIT CHINESE BOYS FOR OUR COLLEGES.

W. J. Calhoun, Our Minister at Peking, Tells of It—A Louisiana Who Doesn't Like Wilson—New Yorker Detected Packing for Europe in Haste.

W. J. Calhoun, American Minister to China, who has spent eighteen months there in that capacity and is now thinking about getting back to his post after a leave, said yesterday at the Waldorf that things are very quiet in the Far East just now.

"China is moving forward," said Minister Calhoun. "The movement may be somewhat slow, but it is nevertheless going on. As for that revolutionary trouble you mention, that is far away on the western border and in situation is to Peking about as El Paso is to New York."

"Foreigners who have known Peking for years say it has changed remarkably in the last ten. It has paved streets, electric lights, water works and the telephone. The streets are thronged with carriages, whereas ten years ago everybody went about in sedan chairs. There is no American colony there. In fact outside the legation staff and the missionaries there are practically no Americans. We still have a legation guard of six marines, but it is only a question of time when marine guards will be taken away."

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