

POPULAR PLAYERS IN POPULAR PLAYS THAT CONTINUE



MARY RYAN IN "THE SIGN ON THE DOOR"



ELEANOR DANA, ARLINE DEWEY, VIVIAN VERNON, ADELE HART, ANNA WEST AND ETHEL CLARK IN "HAPPY DAYS"



ELSIE MACKAY IN "CLARENCE"



JEAN SHELBY IN "ADAM AND EVA"



FRANK MOULAN JR. IN "THE VEOMAN OF THE GUARD"



DOLORES IN THE ZIEGFELD'S MIDNIGHT FROLIC



PAULINE LORD IN "BIG GAME"

EAST SIDE, A THEATRICAL HOTHOUSE, GREW MANY STARS

The Avon Comedy Four Came from That Fruitful Section for Stage Talent, and There Have Been Many More.

The Avon Comedy Four, a quartet of singing and travesty mimics, who are appearing in "The Passing Show of 1919" and add much to the hilarity of this new Winter Garden revue, came from the east side, as does many another entertainer on the American stage.

In point of fact, a considerable quota of the fun in vaudeville and musical comedy had its origin in this district. Some of the mimics who have emerged from the east side are Joe Weber and Lew Fields, Sam Bernard, Louis Mann, Barney Bernard, Eugene and Willie Howard, Eddie Cantor, Irving Berlin, the Roger Brothers, John Slavin, Alexander Carr, George Jessel and a long list of others who have managed to get their names in front of Broadway theatres, either as starred or featured players.

The Avon Comedy Four dates back to 187. The Avons are down on the programme bearing the names Joe Smith, Charles Dale, Charles Adams and Eddie Rash. Smith and Dale were the originals of the combination. Twenty-two years ago two east side boys, Joe Seltzer and Charles Marks, developed a liking for dancing. There was a bootblack establishment in the basement on the corner of Eldridge and Delancey streets, this before the Williamsburg Bridge improvement came along and wiped out the building.

When the bootblack hadn't any customers the youths, Seltzer and Marks, were allowed to utilize the floor practicing dance steps. About this time they were able to get positions behind the counter in a restaurant at No. 130 Broadway, working from twelve to two each day. These two boys, with a natural sense for fun, combined the getting of food with comic antics. So it was that the brokers of the neighborhood went to gather at the noon hour at the restaurant, no longer in existence, and be entertained by Seltzer and Marks. One of the brokers suggested to the boys that they go on the stage.

They acted on this suggestion at once. Having learned to dance and having put together a sketch based on their restaurant experience they went to the old Palace Garden, at Thirteenth street and Third avenue, and were given an opportunity to show what they could do. Asked their names by the manager, they replied—"Joe Seltzer and Charles Marks." The manager replied—"I don't like your names. You will be known as Joe Smith and Charles Dale." And so it was that Seltzer and Marks came forth as Joe Smith and Charles Dale, "troubled artists."

At the Palace Garden they worked from eight in the evening till one in the morning. Their wages amounted to \$2 a week. At noon they continued their employment at the restaurant. Having made their debut and secured something of a bit, they presently appeared as end men in black face in the minstrel first part. Then they did a sketch with eccentric dancing, then a "sidewalk" act.

In the new "Passing Show" there is a restaurant scene, otherwise King Solomon's Kitchen. Much of the comicality of this scene dates back to ideas formed in the restaurant. When the engagement at the Palace Garden came to an end, Smith and Dale decided they would go "on tour," adding two young men to the sketch, John Coleman and Will Lester, and they decided to call their company "The Imperial Vaudeville and Comedy Company."

While at Kingston Smith and Dale had written a sketch which they called "Schooldays." As there were four in this sketch they had added two youths to the act and called themselves "The Avon Comedy Four." They were able to get an engagement at the Atlantic Garden. This act proved such a hit that they were able to obtain an engagement at Keith's Union Square. And from that time on the Avon Comedy Four found no trouble in getting engagements. In the intervening years they have played in all parts of the United States and have appeared in England, Ireland and Scotland. To the latter countries they have made three visits. Charles Adams and Edward Rash have been appearing with Smith and Dale during recent years.

WELL READ MR. BRAHAM.

Horace Braham, who is playing the part of Wally, the young heir to five millions, in "The Gold Digger," at the Lyceum Theatre, is a Canadian and was educated in England. He served with a Canadian contingent for three years in France and has returned to the Belasco fold, with which he was connected before the war.

Mr. Braham had considerable experience on the stage in England and the following interesting résumé of his career may be of some interest to the reader. We give the story of his life in his own words:—"After leaving college, where the only subjects I worked at were literature and rhetoric, I joined the famous Stratford-on-Avon Players under Sir Frank Benson. There I served my apprenticeship, learning to fence, dance, to speak blank verse, to design costumes of all periods, the manners of the different centuries, etc., how to walk and behave as a Roman, a thirteenth century man about town, an Italian nobleman of the Renaissance, an Elizabethan clown, a fifth century warrior. Then, when we played the Sheridan comedies, how to conduct myself as a buck of the eighteenth century with its routine of the snuff box and handkerchief, and the method of speaking the stilted lines. Benson's motto was, 'Work and love it, and we did.'

"One of the most important things I learned then was to soak myself in the literature of the periods of the different plays. For example, if cast for Bassanio or Gratiano in 'The Merchant of Venice,' I read a few chapters of 'Romeo and Juliet,' 'The Doctor's Dilemma,' 'Pierrot in 'Fru-nella,' the boy in Galsworthy's 'Silver-Box,' Charles Surface in a revival of 'School for Scandal,' and the schoolboy in 'Consequences.'"

"I was playing in 'Consequences' in London and Lee Shubert saw the play and engaged me to play in it in New York. Later I joined Grenville Barker's company at Wallack's Theatre, playing Oberon in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' etc. Next played with Lenore Ullie in 'The Mark of the Beast.' Then Mr. Belasco sent for me to play the juvenile part with David Warfield, the young naval officer with Frances Starr in 'The Little Lady in Blue,' and for a few weeks only I played the lover in 'Tiger Rose' with Lenore Ullie before it came to New York. I then asked Mr. Belasco to release me to join the Canadian army, which he did. Now I am back again with Mr. Belasco in 'The Gold Digger.'"

THESE GIRLS BECAME ACTRESSES TO CHAGRIN OF THEIR PARENTS

Miss Eva Puck Destined First To Be a School Teacher and Miss Gladys Miller To Be a Social Leader in Cleveland—Both Now in "Irene."

Children have a propensity for disappointing their parents in the choice of careers, but not all parents have been so chagrined as those of Misses Eva Puck and Gladys Miller, agile young actresses, who are singing and dancing with Miss Edith Day in "Irene," musical comedy, at the Vanderbilt Theatre.

Miss Puck was born and bred in Brooklyn. When she was a baby she was wheeled in her perambulator every day in Prospect Park. Her mother, who gave her the air every day, except Sunday, when Mr. Puck lent a hand, had been a school teacher. As for Mr. Puck, he was and is one other than John A. Puck, a dealer in real estate.

"My parents were not opposed to the stage," said Miss Puck. "It was just that the stage didn't exist for them. Just because father and mother knew nothing about it, my brother Harry and myself learned everything. We had inherited a taste for music, and we loved to sing, and we're glad for any kind of an audience. One day mother took us with her to a women's club meeting at the house of one of her friends in President street, and we did one of our singing stunts. We made a hit and mother was asked to take us to the next meeting, which she did; because, like all mothers, she was flattered. I was at that time four years old and Harry was six."

"Two years later we were on the professional stage and mother with us as our chaperon. This came about because it was proved to mother and father that we could earn a good income for ourselves and in that way get a much better education than would otherwise be possible. We were members of the Huntley and Jackson Stock Company and for four years we played throughout the southern and western States, acting a wide repertoire of roles, and all the while, being taught regularly by our mother.

For Girls, in Cleveland, Miss Miller was destined by her parents for the life of a social butterfly, with a good marriage not later than her third season "out." But no sooner had she dutifully come "out," than she came to New York for a course in Sargent's Dramatic School. In the following season a small part in "Fancy Free," with Clifton Crawford, gave her her theatrical debut at the Astor Theatre. Then came an engagement in "The Melting of Molly," in which she understudied Gloria Goodwin; a part in the short lived "Lady in Red"; a brief season in vaudeville and finally her present rôle.

RESHOEING HIPPODROME FAMILY COSTS \$12,000

Two hundred and fifty performances, or about three months, is the life of a chorus girl's shoe at the Hippodrome. Last week they were re-shod, and this re-establishment of footwear included the more important players with few exceptions. For this the shoe man's bill which was presented to Charles Dillingham yesterday amounted to \$12,000, the largest mid-season bill for footwear incurred by the Hippodrome.

The cost of re-shoeing the people who appear in the Kiddies' Dormitory scene is in excess of \$500. In this scene no "character shoes" costing \$10 a pair, will be issued to the ten principal players in the scene, while the thirty-five girls received footwear of satin with soft leather soles, costing \$7.50 a pair. No allowance is made in these figures for the footwear of the thirty-three pajama girls, but the footwear used by them, sewn into their pajamas, must be repaired at least once in two weeks.

In the Fairyland scene, which follows, specially designed dancing shoes, costing \$15 a pair, were issued to ten dancing principals; thirty-two ballet dancers received new footwear costing \$10 a pair, and ninety-six sprites, rainbow girls and fairies were issued new footwear at the same price. Shoes used in this scene are made of kid with leather soles and heels. In addition, Miss Belle Story, the Hippodrome prima donna, was provided with a new pair of slippers adorned with rhinestone buckles and costing about \$60, while Clyde Cook, the eccentric dancer, drew a new pair of doekin dancing shoes invoiced at \$25.

SMITH COLLEGE.

NORTHAMPTON, Mass., Saturday.—"Sappho and Phaon," a play by Percy Mackaye, was chosen by the senior class to be presented at the Smith College commencement, it was announced here today at the office of the Smith College Weekly, of which Miss Margaret Broad, of Fort Worth, Texas, of the class of 1920, is editor in chief. Trials for parts in the serious dramatic performance will begin at once. It was announced at the same time that the results of the senior elections showed the following successful candidates for offices in the dramatic club—Chairman of Scenery, Helen Cass, of Albany, N. Y.; Chairman of Costumes, Ruth Haver, of

CONCERTS FOR NEXT SUNDAY.

Concerts for next Sunday include those of the Symphony Society in Aeolian Hall, Josef Hofmann in Carnegie Hall, Josef Adlar in the Waldorf-Astoria, Haymer Rovinski, pianist, in the Princess Theatre; the opera concert at the Metropolitan Opera House, the Chicago Opera Company's concert in the Hippodrome, and the Friends of Music in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

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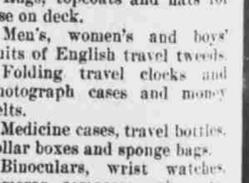
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