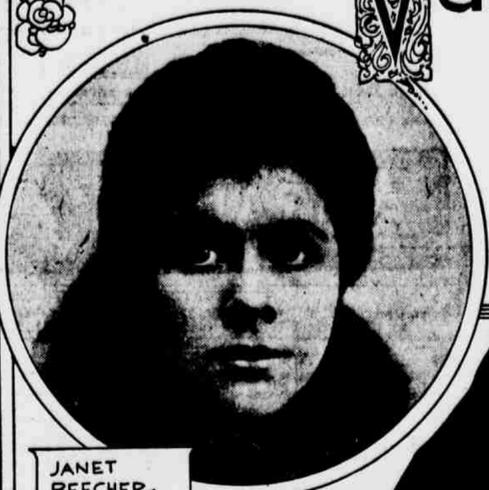


# Variety in the Springtime Drama



Laura Crews in "A Pair of Petticoats"



Janet Beecher in "Yes or No"



Scene from the Stuart Walker production of 'The Book of Job' at the Booth Theatre. Left to right—George Gaul as Job, Walter Hampden as Elihu, and Henry Buckler, Eugene Stockdale, Edgar Stehli as Job's three friends.



Belle Story in "Cheer Up"



Fania Marinoff in "Pan and the Young Shepherd"

brought on the away and dominion of the lusty gentleman who takes her to wife.

These matinees will be doubly interesting in that the important players who have been chosen by Miss Taylor to play the leading roles opposite herself will, like herself, be making their first appearances in Shakespearean roles. O. P. Heggie, who is now appearing with her in "Happiness" and whose performance in "Androcles and the Lion" and "Justice" were among the most notable pieces of acting seen in New York in the seasons in which those plays were presented, is to be the *Shylock*. Jose Ruben, best remembered for his work last season with the Washington Square Players and for his performance of the role of the romantic *Alfred de Mores* in "Madame Sans" with Mrs. Fiske, is to be the *Romeo* and Shelley Hill, now prominent in the cast of "Why Marry?" and one of the most finished light comedians in the American theatre, is to be the *Petruchio*.

In arranging the casts for these special performances Miss Taylor was insistent that every one ensuring a leading part should, like herself, bring a fresh viewpoint unhampered by tradition or the delineation of the character in question.

"I know extremely little about the established and traditional method of interpretation of the parts which I am to assume," she announces, "and I am foolish enough to think that this will be an aid rather than a handicap to me. I will probably be accused of monumental audacity in attempting so much at once, but I hope that I will be good in at least one of the three roles. If my public gives evidence of liking me particularly well in one of them I hope later to appear in an elaborate revival of the play in which the character has a place."

The cast which has been arranged for the scene from "The Merchant of Venice" will include such well-known players as Frederick Perry as *Antonio*; Edward Mackey, as *Antonio*; Leonard Mudge, as *Bassanio*; Hubert Bruce, as the *Duke*; and Lynn Fontanne, as *Nerissa*. All of these players will have roles in the scenes from "The Taming of the Shrew" as well.

It was Miss Taylor's original intention to devote the profits of these four matinees to some war charity, but when the cost of the production and the limited capacity of the Criterion Theatre were considered and a little figuring was done, it was discovered that there wouldn't be any even if the theatre were sold out at each of the four performances.

**PLAYS THIS WEEK.**  
"The Gipsy Trail," which had a long run at the Plymouth Theatre, will hold the stage of Loew's Seventh Avenue Theatre this week. The original cast, with Roland Young, Phoebe Foster, Ernest Glendinning and Frank Longacre will be seen in the principal roles.  
"The Boomerang," which also had a long run on Broadway and a tour on the road, will be the presentation at the Standard Theatre.

By LAWRENCE REAMER.

There is much to be grateful for in the skilled interpretation of "The Wild Duck" which Arthur Hopkins brought forward at the Plymouth Theatre on Monday night. But there is in reality more to thank him for than the public realizes. One of the legends about the play is that the character of the disagreeable reformer represents none other than Ibsen. In view of the knowledge of his character so freely distributed to the world during his lifetime there seems no reason to doubt the truth of this theory. Probably there could not have been a more irritating person in literature than Henrik of the cold black eyes, with a beard like gypsum, and certainly there was no more fatuous meddler ever put into a play than his double who caused all the misery there is in "The Wild Duck."

It is in respect to this character that the public has cause for such gratitude to Mr. Hopkins. On more than one occasion the actor who played *Dr. Relling* in some Scandinavian theatre "made up" to look like Ibsen. Even to-day it is not in the least apparent why the sentiments of this indulgent physician, who believes that well enough should be let alone, should be confounded with those of the man who wrote "An Enemy of the People." So the player was reasonably criticised both on the ground that the taste of his performance was questionable and that from the view of interpretation he was altogether wrong, since *Werle* and not *Relling* represents in reality the dramatist. So the audience was spared the apparition of old Dr. Ibsen on the stage.

In other ways the performance lacked much of the owl-like solemnity usually considered an indispensable part of the Ibsen manner. None of the actors strutted about in the manner of hearse horses, and none of the women spoke their platitudes with the ominous forebodings of the hoot owl. On the other hand, Mr. Hopkins had his actors go at the piece for its theateric values. And the theatre values are always enough to insure an interesting evening when a specimen of the Ibsen theatre so good as "The Wild Duck" is in question. With some of the other dreary mediocrities that have aroused the enthusiasm of his admirers treatment is powerless to ameliorate their powers of ennui.

It is often the fate of the poet in his most impassioned carolling to sing what others before him have found the inspiration for their songs. There is a similar danger for the playwright. In "The Wild Duck" he is again tell-

ing the world that where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise and that a *Red's* paradise is better than none at all. So he is ever in the attitude of little Johnny Horner who puts in his thumb and pulls out a plum which has been pulled out by countless predecessors throughout the centuries before little Johnny happened to think of it. But that never in the least disturbed the solemn contemplation of the good doctor who kept his microscope fixed on the life of his countrymen.

Henry James defined the plays of Ibsen for all time when he called them suburban. His admirers will say that in spite of the restricted social range of the characters, their emotions symbolize the feelings of the world. But do they? Would not the characters in the play now on view at the Plymouth Theatre, for instance, have felt and acted differently in the conditions about them had they been allowed to exist in a somewhat more spacious atmosphere? The variety of the human is of course of all castes, but the search for the ideal which is the characteristic of Ibsen, the real Ibsen, would easily have been eliminated from the troublesome head of *Gregor* had he lived in a broader segment of the world. As it was he lived in a state with its little social ideas so compactly packed together that there was no place for the wind to blow over them. So he had to explode whenever a disagreeable truth found lodging like a microbe in his system. The egotism of *Hjalmar* is possible the world over. The old forester blazing away at the frightened rabbits in the garret is conceivable only in a most parochial society. And that is with no exception true of the rest of the men and women who populate the scenes of the long play. They would all have been different had they been

**THE WEEK IN THE THEATRES.**  
**MONDAY**—The Forty-fourth Street Roof Theatre: The Shuberts present "A Pair of Petticoats," farce by Cyril Harcourt.  
The Greenwich Village Theatre: Director Conroy and his players will be seen in the first American performance of Maurice Hewlett's play "Pan and the Young Shepherd."  
The Lyric Theatre: Blanche Bates and Holbrook Blinn will be seen in "Getting Together," an entertainment to encourage recruiting.  
The Broadhurst Theatre: Hitchcock and Gets will give here "Follow the Girl," seen first at another theatre.  
**TUESDAY**—Theatre du Vieux Colombier: Jacques Copeau will present Moliere's "L'Avare."

reared in a somewhat more cosmopolitan air. And this is true of most of the Ibsen theatre. The sublimity of its tragedy lifts "Ghosts" into a sphere of its own.  
It is of course difficult for the theatregoer of the day to keep his seat in patience when the hunting scene of the third act is prepared for the pleasure of the spectators. Drawing out a canvas curtain with a net at the top, which thus insures light but keeps the animals inside the mock forest, father and son go after the chickens, the rabbit and the one wild duck with a broken wing and a scar from the bite of a dog on its leg. This is of course a direct descent into the realm of burlesque. It is necessary to keep the symbolism and all the authority of the playwright's name in mind to refrain from derisive laughter. The climax of this preposterous and silly episode—Ibsen could be amusingly silly at times—"Did he have vine leaves in his hair?"—is the appearance of the old forester with the skin of a rabbit and the announcement that he has salted the meat of the beast, which is as sweet as sugar.  
The sudden departure of the inebriated parson from the table here

seasons, although nothing like "Let's Go" was ever seen there, nothing like "Let's Go" has indeed been seen in this city for a score of years. Such amusing farces were more or less common in the pre-A. M. Palmer days of the theatre. Since the unfortunate divulgence of the London Follies and the fleeting glimpse that the Blue Pierrots gave Broadway of their talents, there has been nothing like the play at the Fulton Theatre. Or is it still there?

The intimate review has been the recent occasion of the undoing of more than one of the funny men. Just how intimate must a review be to make it worth \$2 and a war tax? Is it enough if the chief comedian leans over and talk confidentially to the leader of the small—usually very small—orchestra? Is it sufficient that the comedian speaks jocosely to the leading lady about her husbands or some other equally domestic matter to justify the manager in asking the public to pay \$2 for anything of this precious kind when the bill at an ordinary vaudeville theatre contains ten or fifteen acts which are just as intimate and just as amusing? The fact that this enterprise is usually housed in a small theatre adds to its intimacy and incidentally to the expense of the spectators who are unwise enough to invest in the "intimate review."

Probably even the most enthusiastic admirer of the vivacious Miss White and the experienced Mr. Rock will never want to lay eyes on either of the pair again after witnessing their excessive efforts to please in the first essay of their own. There has been no more tragic example of the blighting effects of the "intimate review" when the actor dispenses with the aid of playwright, scene painter, costumer and collector. But there are probably few comedians who do not



Laurette Taylor and J.M. Kerrigan in "Happiness"



Walter Catlett and Mercedes Lorenze in "Follow the Girl"



Clara Moores and William Hodge in "A Cure for Curables"



Irving Fisher and Nora Bayes in "The Conan Revue 1910"