WALTER BRINGS ANOTHER JOHN FOX STORY TO STAGE

"The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," Which Had Its Premiere at the Belasco Theater Last Evening, Transfers But the First Part of This Story of the Cumberlands to the Boards, Dealing Mainly with Chad's Intense Love of His Dog.

By JULIA CHANDLER.

In his dramatization of "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come" Eugene Walter has transferred to the stage but a portion of the story of the Cumberlands which John Fox, jr., gave us in his novel of the same name, the four-act play, which had its first presentation on any stage at the Belasco Theater last evening, having to do only with the early life and struggles of Chad and covering but a year in time.

The tale commences in the autumn of 1858 in front of the home in which the little waif has been adopted. We find the boy desolate in the death of his loving protectors; eager to flee the heavy hand of Nathan Cherry who swears that the child is bound out to him for a period of seven years. Befriended only by his dog, Jack, the boy determines to run away because of Cherry's threats to kill the dog, a purpose in which he is abetted by Red Fox, and the younger element of the Turner clan, whose quick sympathies go out to Chad in his hatred of their common foe, the Dillons.

The first act witnesses a fierce fight between Chad and Little Tad Dillon, with the dog Jack as the bone of contention, resulting in the orphan boy's first victory over his enemy.

The second act finds Chad a member of the Turner household; playmate of Melissa, the second of the trinity of waifs of which Dog Jack forms the third. A year has elapsed and Red Fox has not yet returned from the settlement where he has gone to establish the family ties of Chad. To this scene of Joel Turner's cabin, at Kingdom Come, the grotesque mountaineer finally returns with his mission accomplished, and Major Calvin Buford as his companion.

Still in their hatred of the boy and the Collie, who has fought and licked their own dog, the Dillons bring to the Turner Cabin accusation of Jack's guilt as a sheep killer, and for a time it looks dark for the splendid Collie, as even the school teacher, who has been his stanchest friend, is forced to testify against him. After a fierce quarrel the sheriff agrees to Major Buford's proposition that the dog be given a trial for his life and the remainder of the play has to do with Chad's defense of his beloved pet; the clearing of the fine animal; the shame of the Dillons, caught in their perfidy; the establishment of Chad's kinship to Major Buford, and the uncovering of Nathan Cherry's deep laid schemes and crimes.

This little summary makes it obvious that the play is, as the program describes, "a romance of three waifs—a boy, a girl and a dog"—although it must be admitted that the romantic element is but a flimsy thread.

Interest centers not therefore in the love of the boy and girl but rather in the little chap and his great affection for his dog. Chad is just boy and we love him. Desolate he stands in front of the cabin emptied by death, and explains

JACK DAVIS,
Belasco.

his isolated position. A pathetic little figure he kneels and explains to God his necessity of flight and down in the hearts of us we feel the strings tighten, and when he makes his defense of Jack in the open court of a mountain clearing, and proves the perfidy of the Dillons we want to rise up and shout our gladness with the Turner tribe. All the way through from first to last of the play that has small interest outside of his personal struggles Master Jack Davis embues his characterization of Chad with beautiful simplicity and much natural grace, impressing his auditors with the inate refinement which the final establishment of his parentage justifies.

In his effort to inject into a comedy of character a romantic element Mr. Walter has forced the situation and struck a distinctly insincere note in Melissa, a little girl who is quite too young in years to be capable of such tender passions as the playwright has forced her to assume. Allowing for the unusual freedom and license of her environment the auditor is yet unable to accept the mature emotionalism of this child who takes "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come" under her loving and protective wing the first moment she sets eyes on him declaring that "Thy people shall be my people; thy God my God," or words to that effect.

From this time on Melissa's interest in Chad is subject to violent bursts of passion at the slightest suggestion that circumstances may at any time remove him from the Kingdom Come vicinity, resenting even the possibility of an education for the boy for fear it may estrange him from the mountain life and his associates there.

A wild, gypsy-like thing, Melissa knows no law save that of her fierce little self, but frequently furnishes a delightful picture, as visualized by Mona Hungerford, in her turkey red frock against the picturesque mountain settings.

Aside from Chad, the dog, and Melissa, the remainder of the cast presenting "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come" is faithful to the type of Cumberland mountaineer who lives in his feuds and hates, and succeeds in holding this spirit of bitterness and enmity as a dominating feature of the story.

Mark Price gives a brief but excellent performance as Nathan Cherry; Wallace Owen's grotesque visualization of Red Fox was somewhat handicapped last evening by a lack of smoothness in his lines; Robert Rogers presents an effective picture of the Kentucky gentleman of the old school; Daniel Ross rings true as the head of the Turner clan; Robert Forest plays old Tad Dillon with all the fierceness the role requires; Joseph R. Mann does a splendid bit as the Squire; James Mace is an unconvincing mannikin in the role of the schoolmaster; Louise Mackintosh gives a faithful portrayal of the mountain "Mammy," while others in the large cast are effective in smaller parts.

Edgar MacGregor has staged "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come" with much of that beauty and elaboration of mountain scenery which characterized the production of Mr. Walter's dramatization of "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," although this later play falls far short of the story of June Taliferro, her lover and her people, both in its romantic appeal and dramatic strength.

National—"Ziegfeld Follies."

At last—they're here! After this week theatrical Washington can now sit down and placidly wait for next year. The "Ziegfeld Follies" of 1915 "came," "saw" and conquered. The show comes up to your expectations, whatever they are. On the whole, its as good as any former follies. In spots, its better.

The job of telling what's in the show is like that of the man outside the big tent. "Inside we have girls, girls, girls; the only Leon Errol, Ed Wynn, Bert Williams and Will West; the world's greatest collection of dancers and singers; the most wonderful scenic effects ever shown; etc., etc., etc." Be thankful we have a program handy—it could never be done without a program. Here they come as they come:

A wonderful under-the-sea scene opens the show, in which a mere man in a submarine navigates among mermaids in search of an unspoiled woman." "There's no such person on the earth," he explains to an inquisitive siren. We suddenly jump to the front of a gorgeous drop, "The Home of the Sun," and hear Vivian Oakland and male chorus sing, "Hold Me In Your Loving Arms," and you wish you could—that is, hold Vivian, not the chorus—that is, also, if you are a man. The kaleidoscope shifts and George White is singing a zebra lady song in the midst of a crowd of girls in stunning striped costumes. He has finished and we are in the Catskills, watching Rip Van Winkle mannikins—or, girlikins would be better—do a weird dance. Here is where Errol, Wynn and West get in their first broadsides, as Rip, Nut Sundae, the baseball evangelist, and Jennings B. Ryan, respectively.

Supply your own adjectives for Anna Pennington, just so they're superlatives. She dances next. Bert Williams caroms in for a jungle scene with West and a Phil Dwyer lion. The scene's a scream. Radiumland, in which Charles Purcell and the Radium Girls sing and dance, respectively, makes about the most stunning effect in the show. Nothing funnier appears in the whole performance than the "Commotion Picture," in which Ed. Wynn, in real life, directs a motion-picture rehearsal with the other members of the company, in "reel" life.

Dainty Ina Claire makes her bow with Charles Purcell by means of the "Hello Frisco" song, the heads of girls sticking out of a huge map of the United States to represent cities en route across the continent. A newcomer to the Follies, W. C. Fields, recruited from vaudeville, has a great trick pooltable act, in which he is ably assisted by Wynn, the Oakland sisters, and others. A typical Ziegfeld finale to the first act comes in the shape of a parade of the "Rulers of the World," the audience testifying to its neutrality at the appearance of each foreign ruler by trying to outapplaud those who are trying to outapplaud others.

A dainty second-act opening is in the shape of a Christmas scene, in which Purcell sings "I'll Be a Santa Claus to You," and several girls appear as lighted Christmas trees. Fields does another comedy juggling stunt all by himself, and another real laugh comes with the "Hallway of the Bunkem Court Apartment," with Bert Williams, Errol's jag, et al. Its a constant scream. Ina Claire makes her second appearance with her "Marie Odile" song, in which she tells how the little novitiate "gets away with" her innocence. Purcell has another song, "A Girl for Each Month in the Year," written solely to get a bunch of girls on the stage in wonderful creations. Miss Pennington and George White do a clever "flirtation dance," and Ed. Wynn comes on disguised as himself and gives away a lot of secrets about the show in general and his salary in particular. The big dance number, under the heading of "Elysium," is gorgeously staged and skillfully performed by Emma Haig, Lucille Cavanaugh and Carl Randall. Leon Errol and May Hennessey do their familiar acrobatic dance, with some additions. Miss Hennessy is remembered for her work in "The Belle of Bond Street" and "The Pink Lady." Bert Williams sings a new song about being a prolific murderer and another, "Don't Let the Same Bee Sting You Twice." The grand finale gives everybody a chance to show what he or she can do in the dancing line, Lucille Cavanaugh, Ina Claire, Carl Randall and Chas. Purcell being featured.

The show is real "Follies," up to all "Follies" standards. If that is your kind of a show, don't miss it.

Poli's—"Clothes."

The Poli Players have put over in fine shape a modernized version of "Clothes," the comedy of humor and fashion by Channing Pollock, which afforded Grace George an excellent starring vehicle for a long New York run, and was recently revived by Miss George for a brief period. The piece is a clever satire on the foibles and frivolities of smart society, and offers the Poli company some excellent opportunities for characterization as well as affording a distinct triumph in harmonious stage settings and elaborate costumes of the latest mode. In point of smoothness, finish and artistic value, "Clothes" is one of their best productions.

The new play, which is in four acts, is woven lightly about a gown. Olivia Sherwood is living in an atmosphere of luxury and social display where life becomes "the survival of the best fitted." Her shares of stock are really valueless, but the lawyer who attends to her financial affairs conceals the truth from her and supplies her with money. Though not yet divorced from a wife whom he does not love, he hopes to win Olivia, but she, driven by the need of smart apparel, plans to marry a rich lover. The source of her income is finally revealed to her, but not before she has come to love the man of wealth, and after a series of troublesome misunderstandings, everything is straightened out happily and convincingly.

The performance last evening witnessed the return to stockdom of Maude Gilbert, the former leading woman of Poli's whose popularity with Washington audiences has not waned for all her year in the pictures. Miss Gilbert was accorded a most enthusiastic welcome last evening and was the recipient of a great armful of gorgeous flowers. Her portrayal of Olivia Sherwood is given with appealing charm and sincerity, coupled with an irresistible girlishness.

A. H. Van Buren as Richard Burbank is in his best vein as a very splendid lover.

The "big scene" at the end of the third act, when Arnold West, the lawyer friend, rolls down a steep flight of stairs, (a scene made famous by the late Frank Worthing, who broke a rib with almost each perforcance,) is capably handled by Ben Taggart. Howard Lang is excellent as Horace Watling, and Blanche Friderici and Ralph Remley contribute some good character bits. Marguerite Starr is a frivolous and fashionable Mrs. Watling and the quartet of idle social butterflies is completed by Cecil Kohlhaas, Elizabeth Berger, and Betty Farrington, while Eugene Desmond does a society youth with credit.

Keith's—Vaudeville.

Advance announcements led us to believe that Keith's bill yesterday would provide pleasant entertainment, with value fairly distributed amongst the several acts rather than concentrated in any one or two, and happily all expectations were fully realized.

Adele Rowland rendered several songs, the best of which was "Suzanne;" funny Frank McIntyre had not forgotten the art of making people laugh in spite of themselves; Amelia Stone and Armand Kalisz were an artistic delight in a charming musical romance; Charlie Howard reeled around, just as he was wont to do in burlesque; Will Oakland still had his remarkable tenor voice, and Dolores Vallecita was interest-compelling in her den of performing Indian leopards.

Fat Frank McIntyre has a host of friends here, who were on hand yesterday to witness and welcome his advent in polite vaudeville. George V. Hobart's comedy, "The Hat Salesman" is sure to educate many of our local merchants this week in some of the tricks of the trade, and Mr. McIntyre certainly was immense as the drummer, who convinces a highly-strung French shop-keeper that jealousy of his wife was unwarranted. He was ably assisted in his laudable laughing purpose by Elizabeth Dunn, Mignon Leris, and Eugene Rodding.

One of the best, if not quite the very best, feature of the bill, was dainty Amelia Stone and Armand Kalisz, in "Mamzelle Caprice," a musical play which is particularly effective. These artists render the melodious score of this operetta with delightful spirit, and the setting is quite in keeping with the high value of the offering. Not outside New York's most magnificent "establissement du confections" on a gala day is there such a bewildering sartorial creation as Miss Stone displays, and both artists are beautiful dancers.

Charlie Howard was in fine comical fettle yesterday and provoked gales of laughter as an inebriate, while Margaret Taylor and Kernan Cripps sang, danced and talked engagingly, forming "A Happy Combination." There is no better male quartet in vaudeville than Will Oakland and company, and "At the Club" is full of meody and humor. The Keith orchestra, under direction of Prof. C. Fred Clark, rendered efficient support to this entertaining galaxy.

A Keith bill would not be complete without its animal feature, and here we have Dolores Vallecita and her leaping leopards. With a mere lash in her hand, this fearless woman entered a huge steel arena in which five fullgrown leopards were confined, and induced them to perform a series of remarkable feats. Myrl and Delmar in acrobatic happenings "Over the Garden Gate," and Dolly and Mack, musicians, completed the bill.

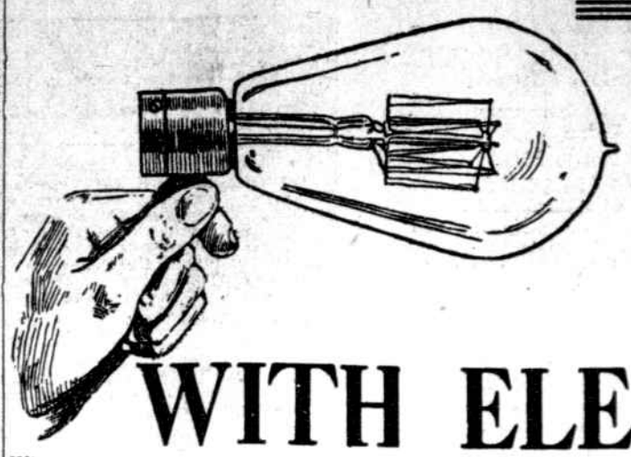
Loew's Columbia—"The Heart of Paula."

"The Heart of Paula," with Lenore Ulrich in the principal role, at Loew's Columbia, is a story of love, romance and adventure. The scenes of the play are laid in Old Mexico, and some interesting and realistic scenes were faithfully portrayed. This picture will prove an excellent substitute for those who have not the chance to visit the troubled and troublesome republic to the south of us. The every-day life of the small Mexican town with its open-air shops, the wandering meat peddlers, the old market women with cooked dishes for sale all form a typical picture of this country. Many such scenes are part of this fascinating love story that is full of stirring and dramatic moments. Miss Ulrich scored success as "Paula," the bewitching Spanish belle. Her beauty and grace give her the Carmen-like fascination that imagination always associates with Spanish beauty. In the cast are Forrest Stanley, Howard Davies, Velma Lefler and Herbert Standing, each of whom do especially good work. The Sydney Drew comedy is brimful of funny situations, it is well constructed and the idea is original. The Bray Cartoon is also very pleasing. The Symphony Orchestra rendered an unusually attractive musical program. The selections incidental to the subjects on the screen were atmospheric and appropriate.

Cosmos—Vaudeville.

The Cosmos show begins this week with a laugh and ends with a laugh and has a generous sprinkling of laughter in between. Preceding the vaudeville opening comes the photoplay, "Mr. Jack Wins the Double Cross," with Frank Daniels in an inimitable comedy offer-

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE.



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