THEATERS and MOVIES
Sunday, May 15, 1921.

The Washington Herald

SOCIETY and CLUBS
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MID-MAY OFFERS A REAL DRAMATIC DELUGE

Three New Plays Dance Before the Week's Footlights

Two New Dramas and a Pair of Musical Shows on the Program.

With two new dramas, a musical revue and a revival of a Victor Herbert operetta awaiting review by theatergoers of the Capital, the Washington stage experiences this week a sudden access of spring vitality that is in marked contrast to the almost utter dearth of stage entertainment in Washington last week.

The new plays are "The Front Seat," by Rida Johnson Young, at Poli's, and "Nobody's Money," by William LeBaron at the Belasco. A breezy revue from the west, "Satires of 1920," is at the National tonight and the Garrick offers a revival of Victor Herbert's "Sweethearts." Other stage offerings of the week are listed herewith:

"The Front Seat"—Poli's.

For years a potent figure in the musical world, Arthur Hammerstein announces that he plans to draw away entirely from that field of theatrical endeavor during the new season, in favor of the dramatic stage, and that he has contracted for five plays by well-known authors. The first of these is a play by Rida Johnson Young, "The Front Seat," which will have its initial showing at Poli's Theater beginning tomorrow evening. In three acts and containing a large amount of dramatic and humorous material, the play has been staged by Frank Reicher. The cast includes Edmund Lowe, Elizabeth Risdon, Lily Cahill, Cranford Kent, Florence Malone, Harold Vermilye, Hazel Sexton, Tom O'Hara, and Constance Hope. During the past ten years Miss Young has contributed to the stage "Brown of Harvard," "The Boys of Company B," "Naughty Henrietta," "Maytime," "Some Time," and "Little Old New York."

"Satires of 1920"—National.

The "Satires of 1920" will be seen at the National Theater for one week, opening this evening. The attraction has the stamp of approval from San Francisco, as far as the far, far West is concerned; it has also the approval of Denver and Chicago. The revue has a plot by Jean Havez, who on several occasions wrote the book for "The Follies." Fanchon and Marco have written the lyrics and melodies. The comedy is cared for by a brace of fun manufacturers headed by Eddie Nelson and Del Chain; Al Wohlman, singing comedian; Arthur West and John Sheehan, character funmakers; Eva Clark, prima donna soprano, and Muriel Stryker, a classic dancer. The chorus is composed of two dozen very pretty girls who sing and dance well.

"Nobody's Money"—Belasco.

Lawrence Weber presents at the Belasco tomorrow night a new comedy by William Le Baron called "Nobody's Money." It is in three acts, and the locale is a Middle Western city. Judging from its author's previous success (he wrote "The Very Idea," "Apple Blossoms," and "I Love You") the new play ought to be more than interesting. Otto Kruger, Will Deming, Sue Mac Manamy, and Howard Gould play the four principal characters. Others in the cast include Frederick Raymond, jr., John C. King, Florence Earle, Ethel Remey, Shirley De Me, Franklyn Hanna, and Louis O'Connor. Frank Stammers has staged the production. Tomorrow night's performance will be its first on any stage.

"Nobody's Money" gets its name from a $20,000 bankroll that disreputable business interests try to get into the hands of an honest governor by means of a crooked servant. How the plot falls and the plotters are foiled makes an interesting story.

"Sweethearts"—Garrick.

Every composer has written an opera that he is particularly partial to, and "Sweethearts," the attraction at the Shubert-Garrick for the week beginning tomorrow, is Victor Herbert's pet. Produced in March, 1913, by Weber and Lucher, the opera met with instantaneous success. Because of the unusual requirements—the score for the chorus requires singing above high C—the opera has not been revived like the majority of popular operas, and when "The Washingtonians" revive it here tomorrow evening it will be the first opportunity Washington has had to hear "Sweethearts" since the advent of the original company. The scenes are laid in Belgium, and the picturesque costumes add to the charm of Herbert's music, and the wooden-shoe dances and plenteous comedy make "Sweetheats" a charming opera long to be remembered. With Estelle Murray as Liane, Ruth Peters as Sylvia, and Stephen Fegan in the prinicipal role, "The Washingtonians," with their famous "Jenny Lind chorus" should present "Sweethearts" at the best.

Vaudeville—B. F. Keith's.

Vera Gordon and company, and May Wirth with Phil and the "family," will co-star in the B. F. Keith theater bill this week, beginning at the matinee tomorrow. Miss Gordon was "the little mother" of the sensational picture, 'Humoresque," and Edgar Allan Woolf has written her sketch, "Lullaby." Adequate support is given by metropolitan actors, and the production is directed by Harry Rapf. May Wirth holds undisputed rank as the world's greatest equestrienne. She is assisted by Phil, the riding comedian and grotesque clown and the "family," all Wirths. Kate Elinore and Sam Williams will be seen in their latest Madison Square sketch, "Wanted, a Cook." Another conspicuous feature will be Jim Toney and Ann Norman in their indescribable composite of drollery, "You Know What I Mean." The Misses Campbell will present Georgia Campbell in "Gone Are the Days." Her support includes Robert Buchanan. The Ziegler Sisters and company will offer a brilliant dance revel. Rolls and Royce are listed for their impressive terpsichorean novelty; Will and Blondy will contribute "Just Boys," and "Topics of the Day" and the kinograms will close the bill.

Vaudeville—Strand.

The Strand announces for the week beginning today a bill that includes Miss Frankie Wilson in an artistic posing spectacle with special lighting and color effects; the popular musical comedy stars, Cotton Allen and the Mae Moore, in a delightful 'Breeze from Musical Shows;' Roy Gordon and Nell Healy in what is claimed to be the most amusing laugh skit in which they have ever been seen, entitled "Wedded Bliss;" Jo Jo Harrison, offering an oddity in laughter and song; the Four Casting Lloyds, in a spectacular "Frolic in Midair;" "The First Born," a screen drama adapted from Francis Power's famous story of the same name, and featuring Sessue Hayakawa in a plot dealing with the tender love and devotion of a Chinese father for his first-born son, as well as subsidiary features with popular orchestral numbers.

Vaudeville—Cosmos.

Eva La Rue, a brilliant musical comedy artist, will be seen as the star of "Little Miss Cinderella," a delightful little musical comedietta, which is to be presented at the Cosmos Theater this week, beginning tomorrow matinee. Promising about a half hour of real entertainment in the realms of fun and fancy, the act carries a real plot, special music and costumes of a daring but pleasing design. Others on the bill are Valentine Vox, in a ventriloquial oddity, "The Clubman;" Rhule and O'Brien, the composer and singer, singing their own song successes; Benson, Faber and Company in a potpourri of songs, dances, acrobatics and novelties; Faber and McGowan, in a delightful comedy, "North-North;" and the Mohls, a clever comedy cycling company. "The City of Silent Men," a late photoplay production, featuring Thomas Meighan, will be offered as the added matinee attraction, and "The Prohibition Monkey," a two-reel Joe Martin comedy, will be shown at all performances.

Winchell Smith Scores With Another New Play

"The Wheel" Ranked by Seashore Critics as Best Work of This Successful Playwright.

The production of a new play by Winchell Smith is of interest to the wide world, since there is always the chance that it will run for twelve years. "The Wheel," produced in Atlantic City recently, is Mr. Smith's first play in three years—the first since "Lightnin'." It is hailed in Atlantic City as the author's best, and is thus described in The Daily Press:

"The insidious lure of the gaming table, the spin of the roulette wheel and the battle of a courageous wife to save her young husband from plunging into a moral abyss is the text of the story upon which Mr. Smith elaborates a play that will undoubtedly be a success.

"At the premiere presentation 'The Wheel' revolves with a vehement whir in the first act, wabbles far too much in the second act and then regains new speed in a capital third act, with a conclusion that dispenses with the process of the reformed gamester's repentance and places him before the audience cured and ready to start upon the marital happiness for which the pretty and courageous wife played so desperately.

"The first act is charmingly enacted. Ida St. Leon as the attractive and captivating milliner is beloved by Charles Laite as Theodore Morton, jr., son of wealthy parents. For her he defies his family and overcomes the resolve of Miss St. Leon as Kate O'Hara not to wed because marriages out of one's circle in life seldom result happily.

"In the second act they begin their married life in cozy apartments, but the shadow of Morton's love for gambling already is on the household. Thomas W. Ross as Edward Baker, a gaming house proprietor and owner of a racing stable is infatuated with Kate, and when she appeals to him to suggest how her husband can be saved, predicts that the chances of curing him of his passion are one in 1,000. Nevertheless he agrees to lend assistance if the situation becomes desperate

"In the third act Kate presumably has sought Baker's help, for he has transformed rooms in his apartment house into full-fledged gaming quarters, transferring his own assistants to carry out the scheme, and then deftly induces the young husband to patronize it. The fidelity to a real gaming palace is admirable and the gradual denuding of Morton of all his possessions is a tense and absorbing process. When he is broke he learns that it is his wife who owns the apartment, thanks to Baker, and the checks he has signed for $35,000 all go to her.

"The relief from despair to knowledge that his wife will not taste poverty makes Morton resolve and stick to it never to gamble again.

"Ida St. Leon was splendid as the brave defender of her love; Laite worked up a fine performance in the gambling scenes; Ross as the worldly but manly gaming proprietor made a great impression and Francis O'Reilly as the sauve and polite manager of the gaming hall was a pleasure to behold."

When Will Deming, who plays the role of a crook in "Nobody's Money," gets tired of acting he is going to open a bake shop. Deming's fame as a cook is nation-wide among his fellow players for they have all heard of his culinary ability.

Deming not only knows how to cook all sorts of meats and vegetables, but he can qualify as a pastry cook and bread maker as well. While Deming lives the art of making bread like mother used to make will not die. Deming's ability as a bread maker has gained him more fame among his fellow players than his ability to act and act well.

Some years ago Deming and a half dozen other players were living in a boarding house in Chicago when the colored cook became offended at the strictures placed on her cooking and quit without notice. There was a stringency in the cook market at that time—it has not let up to any extent since—and the high class boarding house keeper found herself in a quandary. Either she had to get another cook or get rid of her lodgers. In her dilemma she told her troubles to Deming.

"Don't worry," said the actor. "Take your time and get the right cook. Until you do, I will cook the dinners." The keeper of the boarding house had never heard of Deming's fame as a cook and it took some persuasion on the actor's part to convince her that he knew the difference between a skillet and a bake pan. But Deming set to work in the kitchen that afternoon and cooked the dinner. The players who ate it raved over it.

One of the interesting things about a not uninteresting season has been the growth of the custom of publishing plays in book form—plays, that is to say, that have found production on Broadway. Among the works that have thus been published this year are "The Green Goddess," "Deburau," "Miss Lulu Bett" (the play as well as the novel), "Mary Stuart," "Enter Madame," "Diff'rent," "The Emperor Jones" and now "Clair de Lune."

Glen Echo Prepares To Receive First Sunday Crowd Today

Following its successful opening yesterday, Glen Echo Park today will entertain its first Sunday crowd of the season. While the series of free concerts by Sol. Minster's poular band will be the special free feature, there will be a wealth of diversion for the crowd both afternoon and evening. The new features have been given the stamp of approval by the first-nighters who tried them out last night, and today they will be introduced to several more thousand Washington folks.

All of the attractions of last summer are again included in the list except that the old gravity railway has been removed to make room for its more modern successor, the coaster dip, whose 3,000 feet of track covers the space it formerly occupied and overlaps onto much of the surrounding territory. Its seven breath-taking dips and sharp curves give a gratifying thrill.

"The Racing Derby," for those wanting a real sensation; "The Whip," with its novel charm; "The Old Mill," with its winding passageways; the "Midway" of fun, where young and old romp for hours; the glittering new carousel, which tempts the grown-ups with its memories of other days and is irresistible to the kiddies—all these amusement devices are on the program.

Week-night dancing is an added attraction. This year, Glen Echo offers a modern ballroom, a veritable fairyland of beauty; modern music by one of the best orchestras Washington affords, and the modern way of enjoying it. No more does the 5-cents-per-dance figure, but, instead, a fixed charge is made for the evening, and everyone who enters the ballroom pays. All objectionable forms of dancing are taboo, and dancing can be enjoyed with the same comfort and security from annoyance one has in a private ballroom.

Who's This Fellow Marco? Well, Here's His Record

He's a Breezy Son of the Golden West and He Doesn't Care Who Knows It!

"I started by selling papers" is the not uncommon line in the autobiographies of many of America's business kings who, after decades of striving, have reached the top.

In one case that effort has been crowded into thirteen years. It is the meteoric case of Marco, revue producer. The time really was less than thirteen years, for during the war he laid aside his work to help Uncle Sam in the navy.

While he and his talented sister, Fanchon, rose to the rank of principals and producers in "Let's Go," one of the best revues ever produced on the Pacic Coast, their real vehicle of stardom is the production they have created for the 1920-1921 season. This is "The Satires of 1920," which will be the attraction at the National Theater beginning tonight.

Marco and his sister are California products, being Los Angelesans by birth, San Franciscans by adoption, and, in keeping with their loyalty to the State, their productions are strictly California institutions.

After Marco closed the "newsie" chapter of his boyhood he sought an education. Then, with his sister, who had been graduated from a dramatic school and was teaching dancing, he went East, braved the theatrical managers, and in a few months the two came West on the Orpheum Circuit. Since then they have climbed fast to the position they hold.

But with the advent of fame there's a bitter quarrel between them, and it is based on the credit for their success.

"Fanchon brought it," says Marco.

"Marco brought it," says Fanchon. And there you are!

That colors play an important part in the various moods of the human natures is a fact that scientists have proved. The "violet ray" is used to heal various ailments. This fact established, it remained for Elizabeth Risdon, who appears in one of the leading roles in Arthur Hammerstein's production of "The Front Seat," to establish a new color theory.

"Pink," says she, "besides lending added charm and daintiness to femininity, lends untold assistance to health and cheerfulness. "Why," she continues, "if one saw no other color but pink, one would not be sick or unhappy, no bad or unhealthy thought would enter the mind."

Miss Risdon carries the color even into her dressing room and always tries to select pink bedrooms in her hotel. Her favorite dresses are pink, also her stationery and toilet articles and if she could arrange it she would travel only in pink autos and trains.

Chevy Chase Lake Opens.

The opening of the season at Chevy Chase Lake took place last night, and several hundred couples were on hand to fox-trot, waltz and one-step.

Meyer Davis' musicians were at their best. The two orchestras playing at the lower and upper pavilions are splendid combinations of artists and, as music makes the dance, there is every assurance of some wonderful times at the lake all summer.

The new, lower, pavilion attracted particular attention. It is of handsome design, much larger than the previous one, and has a highly-polished floor. The entire park is redecorated and contains attractions so long desired by Washington patrons of Chevy Chase Lake.

Harry Howe, formerly superintendent of maintenance at Loew's Palace Theater, has been appointed assistant manager of Loew's Columbia Theater, vice Orangelo Ratto, who became assistant manager of the Palace on the resignation of Elmer L. Hommedieu.

Today's Amusements.

National—Fanchon and Marco in "The Satires of 1920."
B. F. Keith's—Vaudeville.
Cosmos — Vaudeville and Pictures.
Strand — Vaudeville and Pictures.
Columbia — "Deception," with cast of 7,000.
Metropolitan—Jackie Coogan in "Peck's Bad Boy."
Rialto—All-star cast in "A Little Fool."
Palace — Douglas McLean in "The Home Stretch;" Charlie Chaplin in "The Champion."
Garden — "A Tale of Two Worlds."
Knickerbocker—Jackie Coogan in "Peck's Bad Boy."
Crandall's—"Man-Woman-Marriage."
Glen Echo Park—Resort attractions.

Washington Amateurs To Give Shakespeare On Outdoor Stage

Denis E. Connell, who has been identified with nearly every big dramatic achievement in Washington in the last few years, will direct the all-Washington production of "Mid-Summer Night's Dream." to be given at the Dean Place on Tuesday, May 24, for the benefit of Community Service.

In the cast are a number of the city's foremost players identified with all of the best drama groups, the Arts' Club, the Shakespeare Society, the Drama League, Postoffice Players, Washington Federation of Dramatic Clubs, St. Patrick's and the Washington Players, the Gonzaga Players and the Readers' Club, even the D. A. R. and the Daughters of the Confederacy contributing their share of representatives toward the success of this community production.

The fairy play will be given on a charming woodland stage naturally set with wonderful old trees at the foot of a wide slope on which the audience will be seated. Mendelssohn's beautiful score will be sung by the advanced section of the National Community Chorus, directed by Charles S. Wengerd, and assisted by a number of members of the Rubinstein Club.

In addition to the solo dancers, fifty girls of the Charlotte Patterson School of Rythmic Culture will be the elves of Oberon and the fairies in Titania's train. All of the music is under the direction of Sol Minster, who for a number of years was musical director of the Ben Greet Outdoor Shakesperean Productions.

Agnes Ayres has arrived in New York from California to play the leading feminine part in "Cappy Ricks," opposite Thomas Meighan. Tom Forman, who directed Thomas Meighan in "The City of Silent Men," will direct this production as soon as Mr. Meighan finishes work on his present picture, "The Conquest of Canaan."

After a brief vacation following the completion of her recent picture, "The Land of Promise," by Henry Arthur Jones, Ethel Clayton will start work next month on the famous comedy, "Her Own Money," by Mark Swan.

Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle now making "Gasoline Gus," is having his $25,000 car overhauled. No matter what you pay for 'em, they do have to be fixed occasionally!

T. Arthur Smith announces, among the artists to appear in the Ten Star concerts next season, Leginska and Hans Kindler in a sonata recital; Mme. D'Alverez, the Peruvian contralto; Paul Reimers, tenor, and Lenora Sparks, prima soprano of the Metropolitan Opera Company. Leginska's return to the concert stage after a lapse of two years will be welcome news to Washington music lovers, with whom she is a great favorite.

O'Neill Grows Gay

By EARLE DORSEY.

IN SPITE of the present hectic interval, when stagecraft of one form or another seems to bloom on every glistening footlight, the season of 'tween-covers drama is well upon us, and while the theater may be expected to reveal here and there a sporadic sample of the fall trade goods, the time draws nigh when a hammock and a book seem more seasonable than war tax on seat checks.

At such a moment, it is convenient and appropriate to consider the latest work from the pen of Eugene O'Neill, whose "Beyond the Horizon," "Diff'rent" and "Emperor Jones" constituted such bitter but strengthening stage potions during past seasons. The new O'Neill play, "The Straw," has been issued in book form and alhtough it manifests O'Neill's inevitable urge toward the tragic and the sardonic, it contains, oddly enough, what is probably the closest approach to a happy ending this young dramatist seems able to attain.

"The Straw," by the way, was despised and rejected by Manhattan managers from Columbus Circle to Greenwich Village, including the Theater Guild, but with the volume finally between covers and with O'Neill having arrived at some approximation of his true estate as a playwright, plans go forward for its production in New York in the autumn.

"The Straw," according to the New York Times, is far from being O'Neill's best play, but it is so characteristic in form and fiber and mood that you could stumble on it in some out-of-the-way theater and know it was his. It is pure tragedy, a study of human misery salted with irony. Again it is O'Neill grasping one of the nettles of life and clenching his hand with a sardonic and unmistakable relish of the pain. Here you have a romance unfolded in a tuberculosis sanitarium and the footfalls you seem to hear ever nearer and nearer, like the deadly, pursuing thump-thump-thump of the drum in "The Emperor Jones," are just the march of the disease.

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WHEN the girl, who has somehow always managed and mothered her father's turbulent household, is found to be stricken, there is a ghastly scramble to be rid of her, a flight as of rats leaving a ship, which O'Neill greatly enjoys dramatizing. Also he finds a special satisfaction in the scene where the girl's flashy, complacent, scheming young sweetheart—a part to be played by the same Mr. Ellis who was so good as the soldier in "Diff'rent"—twists and wriggles to extricate himself from the now unpromising alliance.

Later the author luxuriates in still another dialogue in which the mistaken girl urges herself upon a decent man, who likes and pities and respects her, but does not love her and does not want her. Time was when the wooing woman was a target for easy laughter in books and plays, but your modern realist has found her too rich a source of discomfort and embarrassment to waste her so, and thus we have had such painful and stinging scenes as harrowed the audiences at "Diff'rent," "The Hero" and "Beyond the Horizon."

Indeed, "The Straw," as its name implies, is a play of vain and desperate hope—specifically a study of the mounting optimism which works in ironic counterpoint to the downward progress of tuberculosis. Something of this flavored with pathos and bitterness the final act of "Beyond the Horizon," and it is the predominant strain of the coming O'Neill play. So, though you know full well that this girl has only a little time left on earth, you leave her in the arms of her lover, all aglow with gay confidence, happily planning their life together, the years they both will enjoy and the work they both will do. It may be that the tragic intent of this scene will escape the more literal playgoers, though you would scarcely think it possible. Yet the publishers are predicting a greater popular success for "The Straw" than for any of the O'Neill plays, and their reason for this prophecy is curious. They base it on the play's happy ending.

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WHETHER it is advancing age or the decline of the art of acting, or what, we are not prepared to say, but musical comedies certainly do not seem to be as funny as they used to en or twelve years ago, according to Haywood Broun, the critic. Probably the musical comedy books of yesteryear were just about as bad as they are now, but in the long ago there were a number of comedians who had no need of written instructions to be hilarious. Richard Carle always gave the impression that he was putting on a new show every night. He remains in mind as the funniest man ever seen in comic opera.

Of the men now to be seen Leon Errol alone seems comparable to the comedians we used to have. But even here there is a difference. Errol's humor is largely acrobatic. He doesn't begin to have the verbal felicity of some of the old-timers. Still his knee action is worth many quips and it would be hard to match an Errol fall by devising some joke equally clever. Fred Stone, of course, is a magnificent entertainer, but hardly a great comedian. His comic gift is only one in an amazingly broad repertoire. Stone is essentially a stunt man who entertains you by his ability one minute to dance, the next to do tricks with a rope, only to abandon that to stand on his head. The old-timers, as we have said, were different. Some of them remained amusing even on such evenings as they could not stand on their feet.

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THERE is probably no more difficult task in the world than that of assigning to any particular play, novel, picture or the phrase: "Great American" photoplay. There have been at least a dozen "great American" novels and while "The Great Divide" approaches the sphere of that select class, it is a brave critic indeed who dares, even now, to call any one dramatic product "the great American' play.

D. W. Griffith, nevertheless, has probably come as near to producing the great American photoplay as any producer, past or present, and that photoplay undqubtedly is "The Birth of a Nation." This epic right now is proving one of the biggest screen sensations ever offered in New York and it is a glowing tribute to its maker that today, seven years after its first showing, it is proving an attraction so powerful that the Capitol Theater in New York, seating 5,500 people, has been forced on several occasions to stop its seat sale as early as 7 o'clock in the evening.

As a matter of fact, it required an interim of seven years, from 1914 to the present, for the screen at large to acquire a background, a standard, a proper focus that would show the Griffith work in its true light. All hands agreed, seven years ago, that Griffith has turne dout an opus and, in producing it, revealed for the first time the true dramatic force inherent in screen production.

Few of us, on the other hand, were at all willing to believe that "The Birth of a Nation" would be the greatest picture, by all odds, that Griffith would do in seven years. Most of us held to the idea that "The Birth of a Nation" for all its forceful drama and its vivid mirroring of history, was merely the bright promise of greater productions that might be expected to issue forth later from the studio of this super-man of the screen. The fact remains, however, that after seven years, all things taken together, Griffith himself has not equalled any of the distinctly Griffithian technique he disclosed in the great Civil War romance.

"Intolerance," it is true, was a more spectacular affair in some respects than "The Birth of a Nation," but Griffith wielded no scene in even the mighty "Intolerance" with half of the spectacular wallop that he canned in the ride of the clansmen in "The Birth." In "Hearts of the World" he distinctly trailed off into propaganda and in "Broken Blossoms," he made a venture into tragedy that was interesting but by no means was it a picture of the scope and force of "The Birth."

The most interesting commentary one can make on Griffith's production of "The Birth of a Nation," after the lapse of seven years years, is to recall that this man remains the greatest Warwick the screen has ever known, and always provided the weather continues seasonable, I hope to discourse, some bright morning on the course of certain film stars who mistook the Griffith influence for private genius and went sadly among according.