



Society Books Art & Music

# The Washington Herald



SECTION FOUR

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## TWO NEW COMEDIES OFFERED BY THE MID-SEPTEMBER STAGE

### Some Lobby Gossip

BY EARLE DORSEY.

IT IS really unfortunate that "The Emperor Jones," Eugene O'Neill's truly unusual stage study of fear, in which Charles Gilpin, the remarkable negro actor, was booked to appear, cancelled its plan to hold forth locally for a week at the Garrick.

From the standpoint of the local theater enthusiast, who patiently waits his turn at the best native drama—via the road tour, this decision is frankly unfortunate. "The Emperor Jones" is current this week in Baltimore and instead of holding to its original schedule of playing Washington during the coming week, it has been decided to open it a week earlier in Chicago. Hence, the play will not be seen here "at this time."

Which is one way of saying that the chances of Washington seeing "The Emperor Jones" at this stage of its incarnation are altogether and thoroughly remote. In the ordinary course of events, "The Emperor Jones" would head west and in the event of a successful tour roll into Washington around next spring. That, however, is highly unlikely. The provinces, to begin with, have a remarkable aversion to Eugene O'Neill, regardless of the fact that he is one of the best—if not the best—of the native stage writers.

One need only refer to the unfortunate road history of O'Neill's first big hit, "Beyond the Horizon," to find striking reasons for pessimism in the case of "The Emperor Jones." "Beyond the Horizon," which enjoyed a wonderful run in New York, was utterly snubbed—yes, howled at—by Washington audiences and it came to an untimely end in Chicago a few weeks later, a total financial loss, as far as the road was concerned.

"The Emperor Jones," one of the best ten plays of its year and interpreted by a negro star who has been praised to the skies for his profound artistry, is taking the short cut to Chicago without first playing Washington. The qualities that damned "Beyond the Horizon" in the fresh-beef belt are present in heavy proportion in the former play and there is little or no reason to hope that Chicago will show it any mercy.

That, though, is the least of the trouble. The failure of "The Emperor Jones" on the road—and one bases predictions of its failure on the classic collapse of "Beyond the Horizon"—would probably end, for all time, the efforts of producers to send O'Neill plays on the road. Apparently, such plays appeal only to civilized folks, who ask for drama and not for goo. By the same token, for all the anathema that is yearly heaped on Manhattan, here and elsewhere, it would seem that at least 75 per cent of the civilized theatergoers of America are resident east of the Hudson River.

THERE'S balm in E street, however, for Charles Dillingham, long famous as a producer of the merry-merry, has seen the light, forsaken his frivolous ways and gone in for the drama. To make the picture more rosy still, his latest effort, which will ricochet off the National footlights during the current week, is a play by Rida Johnson Young, who, in the opinion of the revered Prof. Kelley, has yet to do a downright slovenly piece of work.

Rida Johnson Young, be it remembered, is the girl who sprang "The Front Seat" on a flabbergasted populace at Poli's late in the spring—a play of profound merit and scalpel-like characterization that was, queerly enough, cursed with the shoddiest third act that ever emanated from the second-hand shops. Miss Young, in response to the gnashing of teeth from this corner at that terrible third act, dashed off a communique to the effect that her own third act—in keeping with the rest of the play—was turned down by the producers and she left me with the impression that even a playwright must eat.

Dillingham, however, is nothing of a shyster. Dillingham professionally, is a gentleman and not infrequently a scholar and I truly hope he has made so much money from musical comedy that he has produced Rida's new play just as she wrote it. That being true, it's dollars to the hole in the doughnut that the National will earn four good notices instead of a niggardly two this week.

It must also be remembered that Vivienne Segal, heretofore a sweet little singer from Philadelphia, has apparently got religion along with Dillingham and is essaying a straight comedy role for the first time, probably, in her young life.

The most completely mixed verdict of the whole round year was turned in by the newspaper scouts last Monday night, when two new plays were dished up at two theaters as seasonal curtain-raisers. It may have been due, of course, to the fact that the boys were still a little stiff in their technique from the long summer rest; but by Tuesday morning, every other newspaper reviewer in town had managed to completely annul and neutralize the contrary findings of the opposition and the result was hardly two blocks from bedlam.

For instance, "Wait Till We're Married," at the Garrick, awoke on Tuesday morning with a critical batting average of .750 per cent, while "Other Lives" at the National, broke even with two boosts and two scowls. I preserve strict neutrality on the Garrick matter, being kept from the Garrick services on other and more pressing matters, but the National fracas is one that holds me deeply.

However—

There was one thing about those two favorable reviews of "Other Lives" which was impressive. Both included paragraphs that set forth with gusto the return of a theater proprietor from the New Hampshire hills.

It may be that the critical gentlemen were overpowered with the felicity of the evening and criticism went out the window. Perhaps, on the other hand, Mr. Ashley, a dissenter, suffered from indigestion, despite his rosy countenance. Howbeit, the team work was terrible, boys.



### In the Pictures.

Group at top of page: Upper left, Vivienne Segal in "A Wise Child," at the National. Upper right, Maude Allen, featured at the Cosmos. Lower left, Josephine Victor in "Remo and Juliet," at Keltik's. Inset figure, Alice Terry, in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," at Poli's. Upper circle at right, Harry Lohder with the Jack Singer Show at the Garrick. Lower circle at right, Joe Wilton, in "Early Bury," at the Capitol. Across bottom of page, reading from left to right: Wanda Hawley, in "The Affairs of Anatol," Columbia. Douglas MacLean, in "Passing Through," Palace. Mary Alden, in "The Old Nest," Metropolitan. Thomas Hagan, in "The Conquest of Canaan," Grandall's. Betty Blythe, in "Mother of Mine," Kialto. Buster Keaton, in "The Saphead," Strand. Bobe Daniels, in "One Wild Week," Knickerbocker.

### "Love Birds" Coming.

"Love Birds," the musical comedy headed by Pat Rooney and Marion Bent, will be the attraction at Poli's for the week commencing Monday, September 25. The gifted comedienne, Elizabeth Murray, will be seen in her original characterization, and others in the cast include Sylvia Elias, a strikingly handsome and splendidly equipped soprano; Grace Ellsworth, Lillian Baker, Leila Romer, Helen Dalany, William Taylor, Harry Mayo, Tom Dingle, Barrett Greenwood and James E. Sullivan.

## Vivienne In Vaudeville To Train for New Role

### Jolson Called Her "a Riot" but Dillingham's Comedy Beckoned Her Away.

Vivienne Segal, the charming young American comedienne who will make her first appearance here in straight comedy in Charles Dillingham's production of "A Wise Child," Rida Johnson Young's new comedy, at the National, enjoyed a novel experiment during the past summer in preparation for her new vehicle, when she appeared as a headliner in vaudeville at the Jefferson Theater in New York.

The interesting part of the adventure, unknown to the audience, which applauded her there, was the fact that the engagement was arranged by Mr. Dillingham at Miss Segal's suggestion. As her role in Miss Young's new comedy is that of a vaudeville performer, she was anxious for real association with the "variety." Following her experience in May at the Metropolitan Opera House in the Equity Pageant, in which Miss Segal's appearance as the merry widow was one of the outstanding gems, various enticing vaudeville offers followed from managers and agents.

Having been engaged by Mr. Dillingham for the part of a vaudeville star, she thought appealed to her as

an experiment only as she had never before appeared in the two-day houses, competing with eight or more artists and acts for public approbation. Mr. Dillingham according arranged with E. F. Albee for the first half of the week at the Jefferson, and Miss Segal "stopped the show" and "had to make a speech" and "was compelled to run to her dressing room and get other music which she had not rehearsed—to satisfy her audience." Just like all the other new recruits who break in vaudeville, Harry Jolson, who preceded her on the bill said to her: "Kid, you're a riot."

Vivienne Segal has had her fling at the varieties! She liked the experience and was surprised when people in her audience called for songs she had sung in "Oh Lady, Lady" and "The Little Whopper." She was a little startled by this cordiality at the opening performance and thought at first when they shouted for "Let's Fly Away," which was one of her popular numbers, that the boys in the gallery said: "Take her away!"

Miss Segal was invited by Mr. Albee to appear in some important houses of the B. F. Keith circuit, but she gratefully expressed her thanks

### Today's Amusements.

Follies—"The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." B. F. Keith's—Vaudeville. Cosmos—Vaudeville and pictures. Strand—Vaudeville and pictures. Gayety—The Jack Singer Show. Capitol—Joe Wilton's "Early Bury." Columbia—"The Affairs of Anatol," with all-star cast. Metropolitan—"The Old Nest," with all-star cast. Kialto—"Mother of Mine," with three stars. Palace—Douglas MacLean in person and in "Passing Through." Knickerbocker—"The Old Nest." Grandall—Alice Joyce in "The Inner Chamber." Glen Echo Park—Resort attractions. Chesapeake Beach—Resort attractions. Great Falls Park—Resort attractions.

### Diplomat Sees "Golem."

Manager E. J. Stutz, of Loew's Columbia Theater, was host to the Minister of Czecho-Slovakia and attaches of the legation at one of the performances of "The Golem" at Loew's Columbia during the past week. Director Leon Brustlof, of the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, selected Burton Holmes' travel-picture of modern Prague, which was shown as an added feature, as the subject for a charming and novel synchronized score consisting entirely of Bohemian music. It proved one of the hits of the program.

for his help in helping her to gratify her desire, and informed him that with a long season ahead she thought it her duty to rest until rehearsals were called for "A Wise Child" late in July.

## Vivienne Segal and Ina Claire in New Productions

### National Announces Play by Rida Johnson Young—Garrick Begins Next Thursday Night.

UP TO last Thursday afternoon, it appeared that the cancellation of the proposed Garrick engagement of Eugene O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones" would leave the local legitimate theater with but a single major attraction—Vivienne Segal in "A Wise Child." A sudden shift in bookings, however, brought about the decision to send into the Garrick for three days, beginning next Thursday, Miss Ina Claire in her new play, "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife," in which Miss Claire appears under a new managerial banner for the first time since David Belasco changed her career from that of a Follies singer to a dramatic star.

The National will begin its second week of the season tomorrow night with Charles Dillingham's production of Rida Johnson Young's new comedy, "A Wise Child," which has already earned a generous share of encomiums from critics who have seen the offering. Miss Vivienne Segal, the former musical comedy singer, is appearing for the first time in a dramatic role in this production.

The various vaudeville and burlesque theaters of the city again announce a striking array of offerings and the photoplay announcements for the week indicate that the screen, for the week at hand, offers one of the most powerful programs seen here in months. The list of attractions at various theaters follows:

### NATIONAL.

"A Wise Child," With Vivienne Segal. At the National this week, beginning tomorrow, Charles Dillingham will present a comedy of youth and mirth entitled "A Wise Child," by Rida Johnson Young, and featuring Vivienne Segal in the principal role. "A Wise Child" tells the story of a girl vaudeville performer who is brought to a life of luxury from the ceaseless activities of the routine of a traveling actress. The complications of the plot bring reversals of fortune, and the girl rises to the occasion like the thoroughbred she is. The cast includes Robert McWade, Douglas Stevenson, Charles Abbe, William Ingersoll, Ethel Wilson, Wright Kramer, Walter Regan, B. N. Lewin and Dorothy Leeds. The play has been staged under the expert supervision of Fred G. Latham.

### GARRICK.

Ina Claire in "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife." William Harris, jr., will present Ina Claire in "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife" for a special engagement of three nights and one matinee, beginning next Thursday evening, at the Garrick. The play was written by Alfred Savoir, and Charlton Andrews made the adaptation. Andre Beaunier, one of the severest of Parisian critics, wrote in L'Echo de Paris: "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife" is for me the best play of the season. What charming comedy! It is delightfully novel and ingenious; not labored, but always spontaneous. It has a gaiety which not only makes you laugh, but also makes you feel. Its originality is involuntary and exquisite. The play shows extraordinary dramatic imagination and taste. There is a continual invention of sentiment and of ideas—and this originality is to comedy, not merely the ornamentation of comedy, but comedy itself.

### POLI'S.

"The Four Horsemen." It is announced that Ibaner's renowned novel, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," cinematized into a motion picture classic by Rex Ingram, must leave Poli's Theater next Saturday night. "The Four Horsemen" cost over a million dollars to produce and more than a year's work in getting it ready for presentation. Rex Ingram was the young director of this sensation. The cast includes Alice Terry, Rudolph Valentino, Joseph Ewickard, Alan Hale, Pommery Cannon, Virginia Warwick, Nigel de Brunell, Mabel Van Buran, Wallace Beery, Bull Montana, Edward Connelly, "Smoke" Turner, Milla Dolores, Jacques d'Aray, Harry Northrup and Stuart Holmes.

### KEITH'S.

"Chic" Sale, impersonator of bucolic types, and Miss Josephine Victor and Company will divide honors at B. F. Keith's this week commencing tomorrow. Wherever vaudeville flourishes "Chic" Sale is a household word. Miss Josephine Victor is presenting for the first time "Juliet and Romeo" in four scenes. A fine artistic novelty is Max Teuber's spectacle, "Shadowland." Charles Lloyd and Earl Christie in "Two Boys from Virginia"; William Brock and Company in feats of muscularity. Jed Dooley, "The 'Comeo' comic"; the Miller Sisters, in "Youth and Versatility"; Herbert's dogs; Aesop's fables, Topics of the Day; and the Pathe News complete the bill.

### CAPITOL.

"Early Bury." With a wealth of song hits, bright and breezy dialogue and a superabundance of charming girls, Joe Wilton's musical fun feast "Early Bury" will open at the Capitol Theater today. "Timely Prescriptions," a rollicking two act musical comedy from the pen of Joe Wilton will introduce a large cast. The chief role will be in the hands of Joe Wilton, assisted by Charles Goldie, Charles Marshall, Helen Gould, Doris Sennett, Jimmy Raymond, Irving Karo, Arlene Johnson, and the celebrated Phil Fletcher Jazz Band.

### COLUMBIA.

"The Affairs of Anatol." Loew's Columbia, beginning this afternoon, will present Cecil B. DeMille's greatest production, "The Affairs of Anatol," featuring an all-star cast of twelve screen beauties, headed by Wallace Reid and Gloria

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