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Seeing the Wheels Go Round

THE stage and everything connected with it has the most fascinating appeal for most of us. After those concerns which monopolize about three-fourths of our attention,—soul, body, and pocketbook,—the theater and its people occupy a high place in our interest. A large part of the attraction the stage exercises is due to its mystery. From the footlights to the orchestra chairs is only a few feet literally; but the chasm is so wide and deep to most of us that it seems impassable. But we want to know, like that imp in "Helen's Babies." We want to see the wheels go round. And it is something more than mere curiosity. That desire is a human universal, and it is especially insistent when it is directed toward the Realm of Make Believe.

WE hope to satisfy something of this longing to know about the region beyond the footlights, and to that end several articles are in preparation. In our next SUNDAY MAGAZINE we will publish the first one. Wilton Lackaye will tell about "The Creation of Characters." You know the credit goes always to the actor and not to the dramatist when a strong individuality makes an impression in a play. The man who created the stage Svengali, who was so wonderful as Bill Sikes, as Jean Valjean, to mention merely three in a hundred distinguished portrayals, to say nothing of Haggleton in "The Battle," in which he is now starring, can write with authority. Moreover, in this article Mr. Lackaye lives up to the reputation for caustic wit that extends the country over.

ONE day, during a rehearsal, another actor asked him the value of a pause. "About one hundred and fifty dollars a week," Mr. Lackaye replied promptly.

IN this issue will appear that story, "Maureen's Dowry," by Maude Radford Warren, which we announced for March 7, but was crowded out by the ads. Anyhow, the story was well worth waiting for, as it is as good as any that have been written by this versatile author.

ASTRO the Seer is called upon in "The Two Miss Mannings" to solve one of the most interesting mysteries of the series, and he goes about it in a way that appeals to one, with just enough of the hankypanky to add color, and a little useful information to make one think a bit. And there is a capital story in the mystery as well. There's a distinction, when you come to consider it. Also Astro makes a little progress in his love affair with Valeska; but for one who acts so swiftly for others he appears dodderingly slow in his own concerns.

WITH the next instalment, "The Silent Barrier" enters into true drama, and it moves with the rapidity, the excitement, the tenseness, that distinguish Louis Tracy's stories. The scene is in the mountains. Bower has laid a trap for Helen. Spenser comes to the rescue with Stampa, and the fine old guide takes the center of the stage.



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